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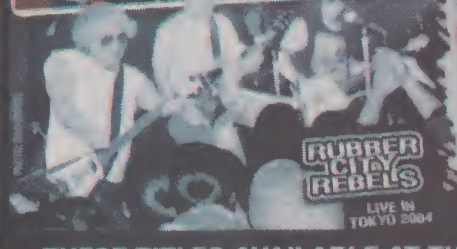

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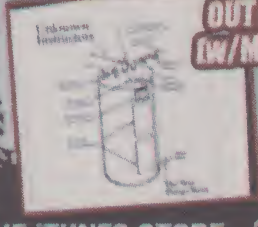

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From the Editor Rich Black

It was Winter just a month ago, wasn't it?

DO SOMETHING NICE FOR SOMEONE...

Namely Arthur Stevenson, vocalist for Sea Monster. While visiting his dad at the end of May, Arthur fell off a two-story roof and almost died. He's still going through extensive physical rehabilitation.

Arthur, a self-employed construction sub-contractor, has missed work due to his injuries, and it's uncertain as to when he'll be able to return to work full-time. Medical bills are mounting, and even money for necessities that most of us take for granted--like food and housing for his wife and two small children--is scarce during this incredibly stressful time.

Donations for the Stevensons can be PayPaled DIRECTLY to the family at the Under the Volcano site: www.underthevolcano.net ...click through the blinking banner on the right-hand side. If you're in the mood to snail mail, cash or check/MO (made out to Traci Stevenson) can be sent to:
Angel Management, 96 Bolton St., Lindenhurst, NY 11757. Thanks!

SHEER TERROR DVD/CD

Thorp Records has just released Beaten *By the Fists of God*, a DVD that includes a Sheer Terror reunion live set at CBGB's from October 2004, and a documentary about the band. Copies of the first pressing also come with a CD soundtrack of the show. (Hey! Isn't that Tyler King? Hope all is well!) For more info, check out: WWW.THORPRECORDS.COM

I'm off to press, babeeeeeeeeee.....!

WANNA SEND US AN INTERVIEW?

Under the Volcano is looking for high-quality interviews to publish. There is NO PAY involved. We like many genres of music, but Punk and Hardcore are generally what set our loins on fire, and we're ONLY interested in bands that have a CD available through national distributors. Email us first about your interview ideas. We'll require hearing the band first of course, and have some simple guidelines once you get the go-ahead. Remember, there are no guarantees—we're kind of dicks about the right "mix" of bands for a particular issue, and hafta REALLY like what a band is doing to run a feature. Please DON'T approach us about features on bands from Long Island, as we already have 'em covered.

INTERNSHIPS

Under the Volcano is always looking for bright, motivated, and slightly masochistic people to create and or/fill unrewarding, unglamourous, non-paying intern positions (we are NOT looking for writers) in exchange for college credit! English, Communications or Marketing majors are encouraged to apply, and you DON'T have to live on Long Island. If ya wanna get involved, email a proposal detailing STEP BY STEP ideas for new programs or projects (including how you intend to implement them) or however else you'd like to contribute to boss@underthevolcano.net with "INTERNS" in the subject header. Please also include a 300 word statement explaining WHY ya wanna work with *Under the Volcano*, along with your contact info.

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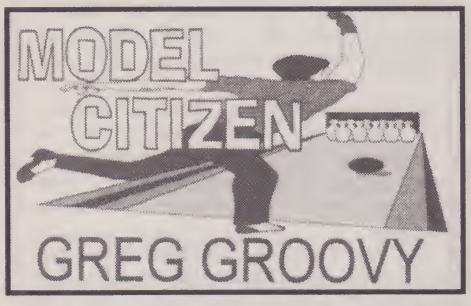
Columns



It sucks when you have a million things going on in your mind, but you can't put any of them into words that would make them interesting to people who aren't **you**, or who know nothing about the lives of the people that surround you. I summarize a lot of the past few years as working a shitty corporate retail job at one of those suck-butt corporate chains that have probably more or less turned everyone in your hometown into one of those *Invasion of The Body Snatchers* pod people.

I worked these jobs and dealt with the misery in hopes that I would gain some sort of enlightenment, and hoped maybe that would lead to a better column. However, after recently devouring several books on Zen meditation, the whole idea of enlightenment and obtaining it are very controversial even within **that** community. On top of that, if you were to mention the subject to say, the guy standing behind you at the hot dog truck during a lunch break, you'd almost be guaranteed to get that New Yawker "Like I give a rat's ass" response.

All leading to why you never hear, "Say, have you read the latest Model Citizen column?" in most social circles. I think something more like, "Hey Chet, the parrot is shitting all over the floor—what should I do? Use this... Model Citizen newspaper thing?" is probably more the rule than the exception.

So, I left that field and entered the mental health industry. Wait, let me clarify that—I **work** in the mental health industry. Granted, I'd probably benefit tremendously from some of the services since the ol' MC is always borderline Looney Tunes to begin with. Anyway, I've been doing that—helping people get some services that they need. Which sounds like a parasitically opportunistic field, but if you see the people that I deal with, you walk away glad that your mental facilities are intact. You also realize how your family situation is better than what a lot of people have/had.

The funny stories are fewer than the sad ones. The sad ones are just... I dunno, I'm too close to the sources to reveal them now. Besides maybe with a little spin (very little) they could make some interesting columns and what not. Which, if you smell the poopy hint, Senor Groovy plans on being around longer than the original TV plot suggested. Yes, this has been flashed by the Nielsens, and they gave the idea a thumbs up. I guess it's sorta like why you seen very little of the Malachi brothers and a whole lotta Jenny Piccolo on good ol' *Happy Days*. Thank you, Nielsen Family, whoever the hell you are.

Now that I'm out of retail, it seems lately people have been sending me stories of their daily mishaps with lousy customers and shoplifters in hopes that they beat one of mine. The funniest thing is the people are too nice and wholesome to engage in some of the tomfoolery that I did. You have to realize this is pre-Zen Groovy speaking from this point now—so don't think I suffered a relapse or something—and, if you're working in a store that carries *Under the Volcano*, be EXTRA NICE to customers. Now, here are some suggestions:

To be good at being a bastard you have to really hate people and the stupid pettiness of their lives, and be revolted by any hint that they may be imposing anything from their sewer-verse onto yours. The second they do, you explode, blow up and say something that can be taken on three levels. Ultimately it's rude, but they'll more than likely not get it—at least not until they get home. If you're not very good at being sarcastic or simply hateful don't bother. You can't worry about hurting people's feelings, or that they'll never talk to you again. In fact, my goal when I pissed off customers was to ensure that they would **never** speak to me again, and if I were lucky they took their business elsewhere. Here are some tips.

TROUBLESHOOTING THE REGISTER: One morning our registers went down. Since the place that I worked was a corporate Porta-Potty, we couldn't shut the store down until they came back up. No, they wanted us to manually ring, which means writing out receipts for every customer... which means every UPC # must be documented. What really stunk was the fact that I worked at a CD store, and people would have 10 CDs in their hands. I told one customer, "Hey man, the registers are down." The guy went and did me a BIG favor. He put back two CDs and only bought eight. Of course I explained the scenario to every douchebag that came in, and they would still complain about the long lines.

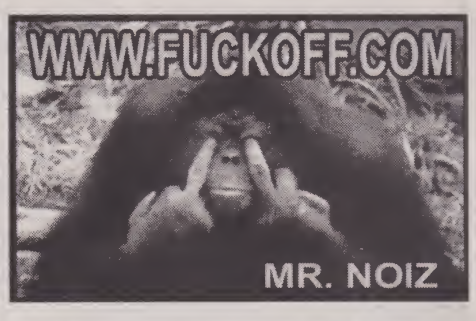
I decided I'd had enough of that, so I quickly came up with a solution: I blasted Agnostic Front and Ministry over the music system. (Remember, it's a chain store and there isn't really much of a music selection other than the latest Top 40 turd drops). The line starts thinning out. One guy holding a bunch of R&B CDs says to me, "You think you can do something about the music?" I say, "You want me to put on some of that fag R&B shit, man?" He throws the CD down and storms out of the store and calls me a fag. I yelled, "You're the one buying Stevie B., queer!" Mission accomplished.

HOW TO HANDLE MONEY: If someone rudely throws money at you: A.) Don't touch it or even acknowledge that they put money on the counter. If they seem confused that nothing is happening, order them to pick up their money and hand it to you nicely. B.) Take the money, but throw the change on the counter—coins first, then bills. C.) After taking the money, when you hand them their purchase, bag it and then put it right into the customer's face—at a velocity appropriate for practicing on a boxing speedbag. They may try to grab the item, so you raise your arms higher and literally stick it an inch from their nose. If you work on your flail, they may realize that maybe you're a little unstable.

SAYING GOODBYE: Saying something hostile at the end of a sale is always a nice topper. "Have a nice day," is for sweet old ladies. "Enjoy your CD, prick," is for mullet heads and hip-hoppers. If the customer has ass breath, always remind them, "You know sir, CVS is right up the road," —in my case it was across the parking lot—"they have a great deal going on toothpaste."

Anyway, that's it for this issue. More tips next time.

PS: FU!



Over the last few months I've had the pleasure of experiencing an eBay dispute. It was for a very inexpensive item that when shipped was ripped out of the cheap envelope that it was shipped in, despite the fact that shipping cost was more then the item itself. Regardless of the facts in the case, the seller never fucking even replied to my emails to resolve the issue. After my third email was ignored, I finally decided to pull the trigger and give the seller negative feedback. To a seller negative feedback is like a cold sore to a whore; not only did I get the attention of the seller, but he immediately refuted the feedback I left and gave me a taste of his harsh words: "WORST EBAYER ON THE PLANET—DO NOT DO BUSINESS WITH THEM." Pretty nasty, but after a quick link to the feedback left for others I found that this was his cookie cutter response to ANY negative feedback. I was lumped into a group of "THEM," but I was confused—could I really represent Planet Earth for the worst eBayer in the galaxy? I was excited and still letdown. I was the worst, but I was one of THEM.

After my identity crisis I decided to check my PayPal account. I saw that eBay had ruled in our favor (I refer myself as a group, since we're part of THEM now). To my pleasure I was informed,

"Unfortunately, the seller's account does not contain the funds necessary to cover this refund. We were able to recover $0.00 USD. We have taken action against the seller and are working to recover the remainder of your refund." Which to me almost sounds like I'm fucked out of my cash. So, my next step is to call my credit card company and have them reissue my credit back to me.

On a completely different subject, check out http://umtv.info (Underground Music Channel) which is actually only a weekly TV show based out of Syracuse. Basically it's a good program where you'll find at least one or two videos that you will like each episode. The show is up and coming and just started in my area, and from what I understand, the producers are working on bigger things. On the site they have a video section with (guess what?) videos of heavy bands that you wont find on MTV—including live sets from Mastodon and The Dillinger Escape Plan—squeezed between Rap videos.

LIP

KEITH THOMSON

PACIFICATION

This week United Airlines, under federal bankruptcy protection, was relieved of its pension fund liabilities. This means that employees and former employees will see a drastic reduction in their retirement benefits, while the packages of higher executives will go unaffected.

Also this week, a senate bill is being lobbied for a tax amnesty to drug manufacturers who avoid paying US taxes by laundering revenue through off-shore accounts, outside of US jurisdiction. These corporations, who sell their products at their highest prices within the US (also being the largest market) claim little, and in some cases no, profit, with research and marketing claiming the bulk of expense.

These are two more obvious examples of the administration's devotion and alliance to, not the workers, but the corporate executive.

With the cost of living increasing, the cost of health care increasing, the wage rate falling behind the rate of inflation, gas prices at their highest ever, a failed educational initiative, and an unnecessary and deplorably run invasion of Iraq, why is the public not exercising its constitutional right, and time honored democratic tradition of organized protest? Why have we not stormed the castle?

In New York City it's apparent that it's basically become illegal to protest, as evidenced by the corralling of last year's anti war protesters in front of the UN, the netting and illegal incarceration of RNC protesters and every Friday's Critical Mass bike ride (an environmental awareness gathering). I too have deferred from joining ranks for fear of spending time in the cell.

When fascist *New York Times* Op-Ed columnist John Tierney publicly calls for the media to cease broadcast and publication of the unsightly realities of the atrocities in Iraq and Afghanistan, we are reminded of W's disdain for the "reality-based" community.

Television is a known aversion to deeper thinking; hence the term "boob tube." With the consolidation of media, it's obvious that corporate honchos (aka W's base) have dug their toenails in further, broadcasting and publishing a myriad of insignificant soap opera dramas guised as news, keeping the public awareness focused only on "non-threatening" information and nullifying any substantial public discourse.

"Legal" medication is all the rage. What better way to numb public awareness than by doping the population? Feel anxious? Ask your doctor about the little blue pill. Remember, blue is cool!

If working people are generally financially strained—both parents working to afford health care, education and to put food on the table—they aren't going to have time to think about much else or act in any way. This seems to be the current, oppressive corporate business model, epitomized by the Wal-Mart chain.

As evidenced by all the poorer peoples of the world and throughout history, when you're destitute, fear for your subsistence and have nothing else left...you still have faith. There is nothing that will cure your ills or solve your problems more than a good prayer. When the ruling, Christian fundamentalist class asks us to bow to the laws of a divine creator (as interpreted by an earthly vessel) they are subjugating the will of an increasingly barren public consciousness.

I was unfamiliar with The BellRays when I reviewed their latest album, *The Red, White & Black* [Alternative Tentacles] for last issue, but I was mightily impressed with their vision, which mixes the funky Soul of Sly and the Family Stone and James Brown with the heavy Rock n' Roll of the MC5 and early Grand Funk Railroad. Anyone with such a unique take on Punk Rock had to be worth talking to, so Rich set something up before the band left for tour in support of The Pixies in early June. The following interview was conducted with bassist Bob Vennum, guitarist Tony Fate and vocalist Lisa Kekaula via email—read on for some of my questions possibly being misinterpreted, and Lisa getting pissed off. I really hate email.

The BellRays

chuck.foster

Under the Volcano: What did all of you do before The BellRays?
Bob Vennum: I played in a bunch of other bands and a bunch of other jobs.
Lisa Kekaula: I worked in a university contacts office, owned my own bookkeeping business, and was an escrow assistant.
Tony Fate: I had a band called the Grey Spikes. We put out some great records.
UTV: Which came first...the idea of starting a band that mixes Punk and Soul, or hearing Lisa let it rip for the first time?
Tony Fate: Neither. It wasn't a conscious decision to create a band like this. It just happened. You know, like a tornado.
Lisa Kekaula: We just started a band, nothing contrived. We're very organic.
Bob Vennum: I always had the idea for a band that wasn't afraid to mix any kind of musical genres. I grew up listening to bands like the Beatles, the Kinks, Creedence Clearwater, etc. They wrote songs and then played them. They sounded the way they sounded because of who was playing them. It's everyone else who calls us a Soul Punk band, not me.
UTV: Does Lisa have any type of formal vocal training-Jazz, Opera--that might be perceived as odd for an "underground" band's frontperson to have?
Bob Vennum: No. She just sings like she sings.
Lisa Kekaula: No training, just a love for good music.
UTV: I noticed your contact address is in Riverside, California. Is this where you originated? If so, how does a band such as yours get started in such an out-of-the-way place? Did University of California Riverside have anything to do with it?
Bob Vennum: There are 250,000 people in Riverside, 1.5 million in the surrounding cities. It's not such an out of the way place and there's lots of musicians there. Lisa and I met at UCR as cooks in a bar on campus. She was singing in the school Jazz band. Lisa and I started the band in Riverside. Tony lives in Los Angeles, and so does Craig [Waters, drums].
Lisa Kekaula: You just start doing what you do; where or what's around isn't really relevant. Everywhere is out of the way when you can't find what you're looking for that best suits you. We're just lucky to have found one another. Creative people are everywhere--and so are morons!
UTV: Why are your old albums out of print? Do you have any plans to bring them back into print?
Bob Vennum: The first two BellRays releases were done as full-length cassettes. The second one was later released on CD by In Music We Trust. *Let It Blast* and *Grand Fury* are still in print and are owned by us licensed out. We will be looking for distribution for them.
Tony Fate: The old albums are not out of print, just hard to get. If some rich person gave us enough money and resources, everybody would have a copy. But that person works for Britney Spears.
UTV: How did you get involved with Alternative Tentacles?
Tony Fate: Jello Biafra has been a fan for years and wanted to do a record with us for a long time. *The Red, White and Black* had no official North American release, and Poptones, the English label that first put it out, went under, so we made a deal.
UTV: Your song "Revolution Get Down" is used as the soundtrack for a Nissan Xterra commercial. This seems strange being that you're on Alternative Tentacles, a label that recently went through some legal nightmares that partially sprang out of Biafra's refusal to allow a Dead Kennedys song be used in a commercial. Is the Nissan commercial something you did before Alternative Tentacles released the record, something the label isn't very happy with, or maybe even something the label helped you land? What's the story behind it?
Lisa Kekaula: We got the deal with Nissan, so Alternative Tentacles has no need to feel one way or the other about it. I don't ask Alternative Tentacles about legal issues that have nothing to do with The BellRays because that's their business,

not ours. Our song was what Nissan was looking for, and Nissan's money was something we were looking for. Just because we're underground doesn't mean we don't know our worth. We have great songs that aren't being exploited; it doesn't mean we expect them to stay tucked away. This is not just the business of music, but the business of life. Anyone that has a problem with our point of view on this don't matter to me, because I don't see them buying my groceries or filling my gas tank or taking care of my black ass.

Bob Vennum: The Nissan commercial came about through our publisher, Windswept Pacific. It had been in the works before we came to Alternative Tentacles...

Tony Fate: We always look down the road, and John Anderson at Windswept Pacific was trying to get our songs in movies and TV. When we made the deal with Alternative Tentacles, it was for them to license the album, and any outside songs licensing would be The BellRays' business. They said, "Fine." Then the Nissan offer came along. Alternative Tentacles didn't seem too happy with it, but we are.

UTV: This record seems to be gravitating more into '70's Rock territory than Punk. Would you agree? And, if so, was this a conscious decision?

Tony Fate: I don't know what that means. Is '70's Rock the Sex Pistols or Boston? We don't make those kind of decisions. Either the songs kick ass or they don't. And if they don't, you won't hear 'em.

Bob Vennum: We just play what we play. Maybe it's the fact that most Rock today sounds prefabricated and Pro-Tooled to death; it hardly sounds live. Dynamics today seem to be "Sing quiet...now sing loud." We try not to sound like this. We like the middle ground, as well as the extremes. If that style is what was going on in the '70s, then I guess that's what we sound like.

UTV: How has dedicating your lives to the art of Rock n' Roll affected your personal lifestyles?

Lisa Kekaula: I've learned to live out of a suitcase, and see the world as more than just the USA. I feel very fortunate.

Bob Vennum: Absolutely for the better. This is what I want to be doing. Not having to plan tours around vacations and weekends has taken a big pressure off me.

Tony Fate: I never thought about it; I just do it. My wife wishes I was home more often. And my cat pees on the bed when I'm gone. But only on my side of the bed.

UTV: I understand that you have quite a following in Europe. How does it feel to be appreciated in foreign territory, only to return home where your music seems to be comparatively ignored?

Bob Vennum: I don't think we're comparatively ignored... The US is also a very big place. It's hard to have the same impact on the whole thing the way you can impact, say, France or Spain...

Lisa Kekaula: We have limited visibility in the USA, which is very different from being ignored. We have very dedicated fans everywhere we go. Europe is its own thing, and the USA is as well. No matter what, if I'm on the stage with the people I love, playing music I love, nothing else really matters--I feel like a million bucks whether somebody's watching or not. That's how I've been all my life. I gotta look at myself in the mirror, nobody else. We move the people that come to see us, be it five, 500 or 5000 at a time.

UTV: Has the band encountered racism? If so, what were the circumstances and how did you handle it?

Lisa Kekaula: Sure, idiots are everywhere...

Bob Vennum: The biggest race thing we come up against is having Lisa branded as the "Soul" in the band and the white guys labeled "the Punk." Parliament Funkadelic was Punk and they were black. Lieber and Stoller were white guys. A lot of Soul music was written by white guys. The fans don't care what color our skin is.

Tony Fate: There are always those writers who think all the Soul in the band comes from Lisa just because she's black. And a couple of them went so far as to say my Soul tunes were cheap rewrites of classic R&B tunes, which is a lie. I don't rewrite anything. Just say it to my face--I'll show you how I handle it.

UTV: What do you think of the music scene in Los Angeles, and the state of underground music in the US and abroad?

Tony Fate: The LA music scene is a million scenes that have nothing to do with each other. We're not part of any of them. I don't know about the rest of the underground.

Bob Vennum: It's always there, whether the press pays attention to it or not. It always has been, and always will be. You can't judge the state of the underground by mainstream press. Just go out to the clubs and check it out.

Lisa Kekaula: I think some is good and a lot sucks. I think being in a band is hard work, even for a lousy band. It doesn't really matter what I think about other bands in an article about MY band. I think some of these questions are filler to kill time, and not really about what I want to spend my time talking about. I have dedicated my life to my band, not a scene. I enjoy good music, but that's everywhere...and so is shitty music. The BellRays have never really been part of a scene.

I just hate bullshit. What I think about music is not as important as what I'm doing in music. [People] listening to my CD and coming to my shows is why I do what I do. And I do that because I must--it's my life. I think I'm in the greatest band in the world. The end!

UTV: What advice do you have for struggling young bands, especially those that don't easily fit into one standard musical category?

Lisa Kekaula: Follow your heart and your ear and get rid of all the dead weight, i.e., naysayers, losers, bitches and pimps. Everybody knows these types--they won't do nothing but slow you down, and life just is too short. Also, if you don't feel like music is something you must do with your life, quit, because you're in my way if you don't. Music is full of people that act like they got something better to do...if it feels like a burden, then it probably is, and you should know you ain't doing any doing anybody a favor if your heart ain't in it all the way.

Bob Vennum: Feel lucky because no one should ever fit into one musical category. Keep on playing to what your heart tells you. Don't listen to anyone who tries to "clean up" your sound. Be open to whatever is around you.

Tony Fate: Play the music YOU want to hear, and play it the way YOU would like a band to perform on stage. I always wanted to see a band like The BellRays. X

WWW.BELLRAYS.COM

Blood or Whiskey is a Celtic-tinged Punk band that mixes Street Punk anthems with traditional Irish sounds. I know, I know, let me guess, you've heard that description used so many times before in regards to Dropkick Murphys and Flogging Molly that it's lost almost all meaning. Before you start calling these guys rip-offs and all that other nonsense, it' s important to know that these lads are actually from Dublin, have been around for even longer than either the Murphys or Mollys, and already have quite a number of releases under their belts. To support *Ca$hed Out On Culture* [Punk Core], Blood or Whiskey's third full-length, the band hit our shores for a Northeast tour, where I got to witness all the drunken debauchery myself--believe the rumors my friends, no one drinks or plays harder than the Irish! Beano (bass/vocals) and Dugs (guitar/vocals) were kind enough to answer my inane questions, so I'd like to thank them for their time and patience. If you missed Blood or Whiskey while they were here, email them relentlessly, and just maybe they'll book a return flight to the States in the near future.

Blood or Whiskey

DAN MCCLERNON

Under the Volcano: Would you please introduce yourselves and tell us what each of you play in the band?

Beano: How are ya?, I'm Beano, vocals and bass.

Dugs Mullooly: Alright. Dugs, vocals and guitar.

UTV: Could you give us a little background on the origins of the band? How you guys got together, how many original members remain? Perhaps someone got kicked our for having sex with a farm animal? Y'know, all the stuff that will be important on VH1's *Behind the Music* in 10 years-we want to know now.

Dugs Mullooly: There are two original members left--myself and Chris, the drummer--and we got together 11 years ago, but it's only now we're beginning to make the right waves. The other old members left to pursue their dreams of being porn stars, lawyers and aristocrats, but myself and Chris were either too stupid, or too ugly or poor to join them, so we stuck with being in with Blood or Whiskey with the new lads. That's a brief history on how it all started.

Beano: ...and how it will probably finish.

UTV: I've been told the phrase "Blood or Whiskey!" has a historic meaning in Irish culture...can you explain where it comes from?

Beano: Not that I've ever heard of before, but it's possible. For our use, it came from one of the old members getting threatened with violence unless he shared his whiskey with someone. They shouted "Blood or whiskey!" at him.

Dugs Mullooly: Fuck, I didn't know that it had a historic meaning, unless a fight between two sets of people over a bottle of whiskey is historic in Irish culture. Well, if it is, I can live with that. But, all joking aside, I don't think it is.

Beano: Although I suppose wars have started over less.

UTV: While I don't tend to enjoy generalizing any band's sound, I suppose it could be said that Blood or Whiskey falls into the "Celtic Punk"genre; a genre which was catapulted into the public eye initially with the surprising success of Boston's Dropkick Murphys. Now as a band that has been around nearly as long Dropkick Murphys, did you ever think, "Why the fuck didn't people catch onto us as quickly?" And furthermore, how did this type of success elude a band like the Pogues for so many years?

Beano: Well first of all, there's nothing surprising about Dropkick Murphys' success, they've worked hard for it, and deserve it. Secondly, Blood or Whiskey has been going longer than them--get your facts right! Nah, I've never thought that at all because I already know the answer. As I said earlier, they've

put the work in and we haven't--to that extent--because we've been stuck at home for so long. We couldn't just jump in the van and be at the first gig of a tour 20 minutes later in New York! Y'know we're happy where we are. We're looking forward to the work ahead, and we like being underdogs. There are enough pockets of supporters of us around the world to build on, which is the plan. We'll end up like a rash that won't go away!

The Pogues did have that kind of success over on this side of the world--maybe they were just a cult band in the US? I don't know, but they were huge in Europe.

Dugs Mullooly: I'm used to the terms "Celtic Punk," "Paddy Punk," or "Folk Punk"--that's just a fact of life. I have gotten used to hearing [those terms] over the years playing in this band, but at the end of the day it's just good old party music. As for us not been as successful as the Dropkicks, it's easier in America because you have loads of stations that play Punk Rock, you have loads of venues to bring your sound to your crowd, and you have got a load of cool people that will take a chance on you, where as in Ireland it's all plastic pop bullshit by the big corporate labels that buy up all the airplay and close down venues in other to fill the market [with] what they tell the public they want to hear. And, you have to be a hard working band, and the Murphys worked their socks of to get where they are to today, so they deserve it. And as for [success] eluding The Pogues, they were very big after their second album, and are still massive today.

Beano: Celt Punk, Paddy Punk, etc.-that's all bullshit. We're a Punk band in the broad sense of the term. People can keep their cliques. We're just lazily tagged that because we have a banjo, accordion etc. Are Discharge and the Buzzcocks lumped together just because they both have electric guitars? The ONLY banner we fly under is Punk, and that's it.

UTV: While I'm a big fan of bands such as Dropkick Murphys and Flogging Molly, I'm curious as to what your opinion of these "Celtic Punk" bands is? Are you in favor of the success they have thus far achieved, especially taking into account that not one member of either band is from Ireland--save for the lead singer of Flogging Molly? Should being Ireland-born even matter in regards to playing this particular genre?

Beano: Both, again ,have worked for it and deserve it. If they wanna fly flags , that is completely up to them. Ask them guys their backgrounds and it's Irish all over for the most part, and no, it shouldn't matter. Nationalism, on the other hand--and only in regards to this question--is, in my opinion, not something I would like to promote through the medium of Punk. Although--playing in Blood or Whiskey--it's a subject that is constantly put in front of me. Any other band I've ever played in, it wasn't an issue. The angle I try to come from within punk personally is--to me--one without borders and flags.

Dugs Mullooly: In my opinion, it doesn't matter if you're from Ireland or not. If you're good at what you do, you will be successful, and I'm happy for the likes of Ken, Matt and Al and the lads because I've known them off and on for seven years, now and they are sound lads that deserve it. And as for the Mollys, I met them a couple of times in Dublin, where they rocked their shows out. They seem like pleasant people, so I wish them continued success.

UTV: Reviews I've read of your band are positive, but occasionally you'll get the bitter journalist who's against any form of Punk with an Irish-tinge to it, mainly due to the fact of the recent popularity of said genre. So, what do you think when this journalist slags you for trying to capitalize on the "Irish Punk" fad, never taking the time to do the slightest research to learn you're actually from Ireland? I ask this because I recall reading a review of yours that went along these lines...

Beano: Well first off, this band was in existence before there was a genre. Secondly, if we were trying to capitalize, the album wouldn't be called *Ca$hed Out On Culture*; it would be called *Drinking Songs From the Emerald Isle* or some other bollocks like that--begorrah! People try to cash in on Irish culture, we don't--probably to our commercial slow death!--and that's why the album has the title it has. We can't help being what we are and where we're from, but it's certainly not used as a commodity.

Dugs Mullooly: If any of these cunts say I have jumped on any sort of bandwagon I will find the biggest fucking shamrock with my shit all over it and force feed it to the prick, because if you're going to bother to review someone's album at least have the brains of finding out the band's past or what they're about before they go shouting their mouths off.

UTV: You recently released *Ca$hed Out On Culture* on Long Island, New York's Punk Core Records. How exactly did this come about? Speaking to Dave Punk Core, I recall him telling me something about how his first connection with the band starting on his trip to Ireland, but if you could, please fill in all the juicy details. And don't forget to tell us about all the power lunches and high priced strip clubs he took you fellas.

Dugs Mullooly: Dave at Punk Core is a sound fella, but as for getting signed, that's Beano's story...

Beano: Yeah, I met Dave, pretty much by chance, when he was on holiday in Dublin. We didn't discuss Blood or Whiskey; in fact he didn't know I was in the band at the time, so we just had a few pints, really. Eventually I gave him a demo, but I didn't think he would be professionally interested because the label was well-known for a particular angle within Punk, but he got back in touch and it followed on from there. We get on great with everyone at the label; they know what they're doing, y'know? We also have a great working relationship with Dave's checkbook. No power lunches as yet-just power booze-athons.

UTV: After the release of your previous album, 2002's *No Time to Explain*, there was a buzz generated around the band. So, with that said, why did you finally decide to sign with Punk Core? What could they offer that no other label could? Besides possessing an exceptional knowledge of all things beer-related, of course.

Beano: Well for a start, they offered RESPECT. They liked it for the music. Obviously they're in business and it's nice to have an angle, but they weren't going to put us under pressure to be the "new" anything, just Blood or Whiskey, and that mattered. They've also [taken] a big chance with us--we do fall out of their usual style of Punk. We could've went with an US "Irish" label, but fuck that! We prefer to stand alone. When that ship goes down, we'll be on dry land.

Dugs Mullooly: Punk Core showed a lot of faith in us, and they let us get on with the job in hand, which is making music, and they are a very easy going bunch, so there was no contest, really.

UTV: It seems to me that the tunes that encompass *Ca$hed Out On Culture* might be some of your fiercest, grittiest ones yet, at least in comparison to *No Time*

to Explain. Would you say this observation is accurate? And, if so, do you think it might have something to do with the album being released on a label that has been known worldwide for the top-notch Street Punk bands they've put out, and the band trying to appeal somewhat to that fan-base?

Beano: Thanks a lot. I would say--and having not played on *No Time...*--that some of the songs on that LP are as hard as anything on *Ca$hed...*, it's just that the recording is not mixed as "big." It's not weaker, just different--but there are plenty of quiet moments on *Ca$hed...* too. The songs and sound are grittier and fiercer because we live in grittier and fiercer times, and that's reflected in the lyrics and sound of the band as it stands today. Rightly or wrongly, bands should try and mix up their sound a bit, take some chances instead of running on the spot and making the same LP over and over again. The next one we make could be completely acoustic and mellow at this point, we don't know. A large portion of Blood or Whiskey's audience has always been the punk crowd and no, we pander to no one but ourselves--it's the only way.

Dugs Mullooly: *Ca$hed out...* is the best in my opinion, and it is the grittiest work we have done, but some material was already done before Punk Core heard it. They loved what they heard and gave us the cash to record it, so fair dues to them. As for sounding like Street Punk, that's where we hang out, so that's where we get our ideas from.

Beano: I'd argue that all sincere punk is from the street anyway. It's certainly our reality.

UTV: Were you at all surprised that Punk Core was interested in releasing the album, simply because it was a significant departure in sound for the label? And what was your initial reaction to the fact that not only was the album being received warmly by Punk Core's audience, but that many of them were lauding *Ca$hed Out On Culture* as one of the best Punk Core has released yet?

Beano: No, I wasn't surprised. Dave knows his stuff, y'know? Dave, send the check to the usual address....He wouldn't have released it if he didn't think there was an interest. Although thankfully the interest is much larger than us and Punk Core etc. initially thought, because they had to repress it after four days after release because demand is so high. Yeah, it's great that people are liking what we do, but you've got to take these things with a pinch of salt.

Dugs Mullooly: Fuck I wasn't surprised; they wanted to sign us because Punk Core are a label that takes a chance, and as for the people that said it's the best Punk Core release, that's a huge compliment because they've released a lot of great fucking bands over the years. I'm just glad that people out there seem to like it--it makes it all worthwhile.

UTV: How did Cait O' Riordan of the Pogues end up doing guest vocals on the record?

Dugs Mullooly: We're a bunch of chancers, so we asked her for the laugh and fucking hell, she said yes. This is the girl that sang, "I'm a man you don't meet every day " on "Sodomy and the Lash"! Fuck me, what an honor.

Beano: Yeah, she's a good mate now. You don't see Cait living the celeb life in Dublin; she's down there with the rest of us, on the beer at scabby Punk Rock gigs. She's one of us y'know?

UTV: Before ever seeing you guys live, I had already been made aware that the band tended to drink a lot. But after spending an entire night guzzling pint after pint with you down in Woodside, I must say that I'm more than a little impressed at your abilities with a glass of Guinness or Magner's in your hands. But I'd like to point out that your young accordion player was looking pretty sloppy passed out on the couch that night. Haven't you guys trained him properly?

Beano: It's a solo sport, ya have to train yourself, but the thing is, there's no romance in being a drunken mess lying in the street. If you're gonna drink, drink, but use it and don't let it use you. I'd hate to think that someone else would make a mess of themselves because they've followed our example. I'd thought people make their own decisions and choices, but as our audience seems to get younger and some seem more impressionable, I'd say make your own mind up. Punk is about being yourself and don't give in to peer pressure. But, on saying that, we're an approachable bunch, and if you wanna come and have a drink with us before or after a gig ,anyone's welcome. We'll be with the audience at the bar, not hiding in some dressing room.

Dugs Mullooly: I have tried my best, but he just can't handle too much drink; maybe when he gets a beer belly he might have somewhere to store it. We'll have to wait and see. As for the rest of us, if the drinks are free--like they were that night--we are fucking pigs. [laughs] Only messing...

UTV: While on tour in the States here, you had the opportunity to open up for the Dropkicks for one of their numerous St. Paddy's Day shows. What was that experience like?

Dugs Mullooly: We opened up one this year for them and it was fucking brill; the crowd went nuts and we sold a lot of shirts that night, which is important for a band like ours to survive on the road. And we got pissed up with the crowd after our set, which was cool.

Beano: Yeah we've done a lot of big gigs like that, but one thing I'll say is that the Dropkicks are the only "big name" band who have constantly given us a hand when at times things looked bleak. Fucking gentlemen to a man...and woman.

UTV: Will we be seeing Blood or Whiskey on the road again soon? And, namely, when will be seeing you over here in the States again?

Beano: We'll be definitely back for a full US tour starting in September, I think. Keep looking at our site for details www.bloodorwhiskey.ie

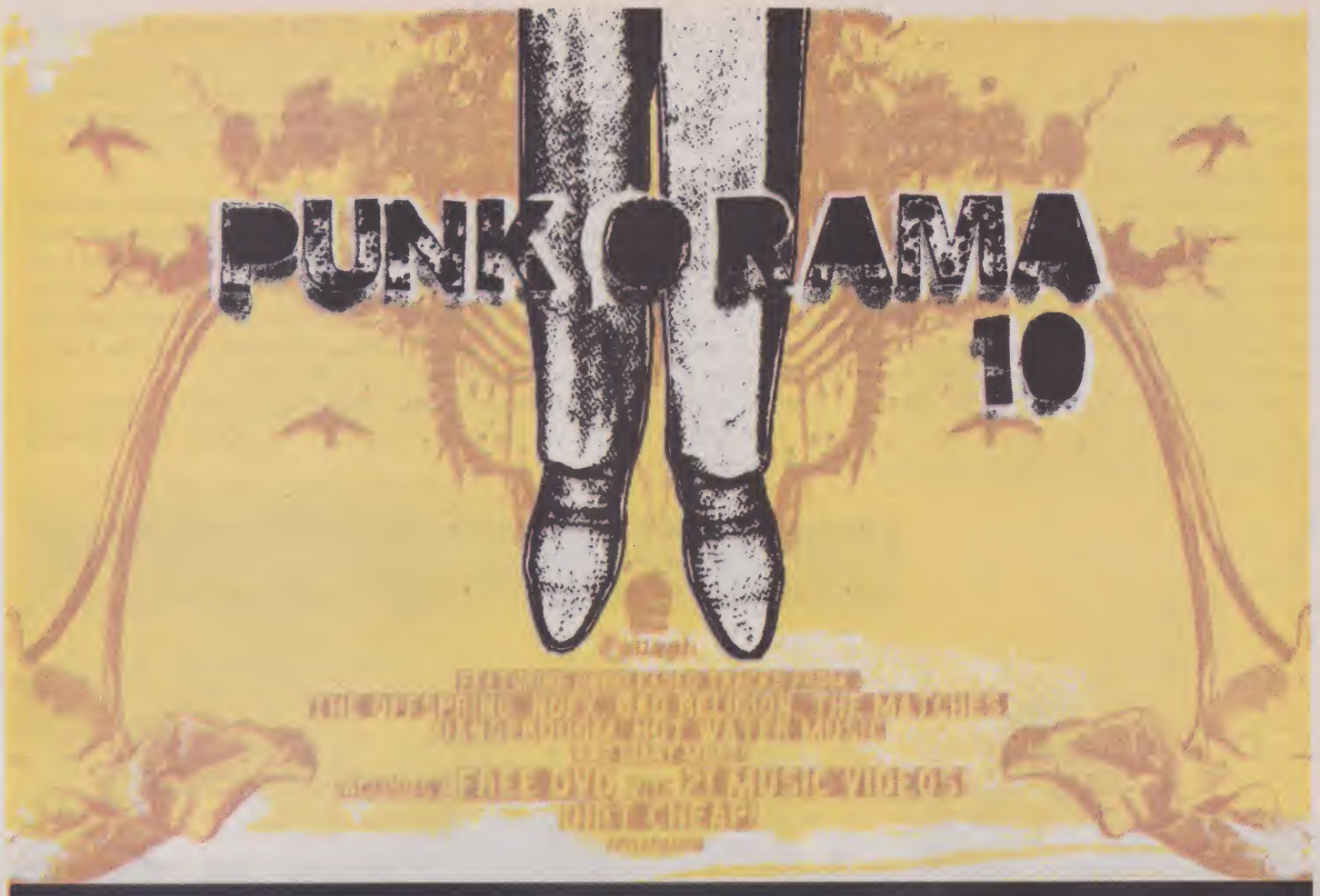
Dugs Mullooly: Hopefully we'll be back soon. We're in the middle of trying to get our work permits sorted out, so as soon as we get that sorted we will be out all over the place in America to promote our new album. So I hope to see yez at the shows--for a good drink, maybe a bit of loving if you're female, or if yez just want a good night out to watch us freaks from Ireland tearing it up in a town near you.

UTV: Alright guys, I wanna thank you for your time, and hope to be drinking with you sometime soon again. Thanks!

Dugs Mullooly: Thanks a lot, and thanks for the interest. Much love.

Beano: Thanks a lot, thanks to everyone for your support, it means a lot. UP THE PUNX. X

WWW.BLOODORWHISKEY.IE



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The sound of Broken Bones will snap you to attention! One of the most intense, intelligent, and experienced Hardcore-Punk-Metal bands from the UK has created yet another album that will detonate your mind, body and CD player. Time For Anger, Not Justice is the latest barrage of rhythmic, righteous indignation from the masters of British Thrashcore. Founded in 1983 when guitarist Bones left the infamous group Discharge, Broken Bones further raised the standard for what was to be considered forceful Punk Rock. The Sex Pistols may have opened the door, but Bones and his boys absolutely smashed the door to splinters, and continue to do so today.

Bush the Lesser reached across the pond to find British Prime Minister Tony Blair ready, willing, and able to assist the United States government fight terrorism by piling up the bodies of over 100,000 innocent Iraqi citizens. Dr. Strange the Greater has reached across the pond to assist this band with its response to this type of horror. The world is as fucked-up as it has ever been, and sometimes the most appropriate response is simple, primal anger. Logic, reason, and polite diplomacy have (for the most part) failed to cure the world of its many ills, but at least we have the cathartic release of rhythmic rage, shouted lyrical obscenities, and the salvation of sweaty, swirling circle pits. To all the fascist bastards in high places responsible for all this needless suffering and death: "FUCK OFF AND DIE!"

The United States is quickly becoming a dictatorship, so check out Broken Bones when they tour this summer, and be sure to get the new album *Time For Anger, Not Justice* before the presidunce proclaims it illegal. The following interview was conducted with bass player Oddy via email.

BROKEN BONES

MARCUS SOLOMON

Under the Volcano: The new album is entitled *Time For Anger, Not Justice.* This seems to be a clear statement about the state of the world today. What things specifically motivated you to give the new record this title?
Oddy: The title actually came from an article that I saw in a newspaper about the Washington Snipers [John Allen Muhammad and Lee Boyd Malvo, in 2002] The young one was in jail and doing all these scribbles, quotes, and drawings. He wrote: "Time for justice, not anger." I thought it sounded better as *Time For Anger, Not Justice*, and in today's political climate, it felt right.
UTV: Do you think that feeling angry is enough in itself to effect a positive change?
Oddy: Anger, I feel, is a very healthy feeling to have. At least it shows that you have emotions. There has been a lot of positive change because of anger.
UTV: The sound on this new full-length album seems to be something of a return to the more "Punk Rock" material you've done in the past. Was this a deliberate shift, or did it just happen?
Oddy: It just happened really…there was no conscious effort to make it sound a certain way; it's whatever sounds great to us.
UTV: How did you get in touch with Doc [Dr. Strange]? Did you know he was a big fan of the band from his high school days?
Oddy: When we were looking for a new label, a friend of mine [Tim Cundle, *Mass Movement* fanzine] mentioned a few labels that we could try, and Dr. Strange was one of them. So, when I got in touch with The Doc he did mention that he came to one of the shows in 1985. [It was at the] Olympic Auditorium I think. He also came across as a very genuine guy, so that was the label for us!
UTV: The *Live at the 100 Club* LP released in the early '80s was on a label called Stoner Records. Was that your label or another side project of Fallout Records?
Oddy: Yeah, it was our own label but still went through Fall Out Records.
UTV: What do you hope to achieve with this new album?
Oddy: I just hope that people like it, and we can get across to a wider audience. We put a lot of time and effort into making this one, and I hope that shows in the end result.
UTV: What do you suggest people--your listeners in particular--do in order to create a more "just society?' If anything at all…
Oddy: In my opinion, I don't think we will ever have a balanced and just society. People are too different, and what is good for one [person], human nature dictates that it won't be good for everyone. It's not up to us [as a band] to suggest [what a person should do.] It's up to the individual to make changes in the hope of making their own life better.
UTV: Do you think your many efforts and releases have had any effect on society…either in general or in the specific sense?
Oddy: I don't think so. Broken Bones was never an ardent political band. Yes, we covered [and still address] issues concerning the world today. Issues like terrorism, war, depression, hate, and etc., but a lot of it was just personal feelings from whoever was writing those particular lyrics. I suppose, in a general sense, some bands say that we influenced them, which is a compliment.
UTV: Why did Broken Bones disband in 1996?
Oddy: I think Bones had just had enough of all the lineup changes and he temporarily lost his enthusiasm for it.
UTV: What brought about the reformation of the group?
Oddy: Me and Dave, the drummer, were playing in another local band called Choke Hold. When the guitarist left, I knew Bones wasn't doing anything, so I asked him to join. [That was] after the original singer, Quiv, departed. He was the last guy to sing in Broken Bones before the '96 split. We tried it as Choke Hold, but Without Conscience--the label that the last album was on--said they would sign us if we were Broken Bones again. After thinking about it long and hard, we decided that we still had a lot to offer as Broken Bones. That was in 2000, when we changed it back to Broken Bones.
UTV: How do you support yourself? Do you have a day jobs?
Oddy: Bones is the only one who does [the band] full-time. Dave is a van driver, Quiv works in a care home for the elderly, and I work in the ceramics industry, but I am about to change jobs very soon. We all have pretty boring everyday jobs.
UTV: What else do you do in your spare time? Read? Write? Movies, etc.? Give us some recommendations.
Oddy: Personally, I read a lot of true crime books, mainly about serial killers. I also do all the booking of shows for the band, and help out with the Conflict website and merch. Me and Bones are pretty busy with Conflict and Discharge. Dave has a family, which takes up most of his time, [due to the fact that] his son is autistic. Quiv is an alcoholic [laughs] but he is always writing bits of lyrics and coming up with ideas for the band.
UTV: Do you remember the show at the Olympic Auditorium, Los Angeles California? I was there…sometime in the late '80s. Any memories from that tour you would like to share?
Oddy: I do remember the show there; it was the biggest show we had played at the time. Most of the tour was a bit of a blur to be honest, but some things do stick in the mind, like the time we played a matinee at CBGB's. James Hetfield and Scott Ian turned up to see us, then we had backstage passes to see Metallica later. Best memory? Seeing Hetfield on Scott Ian's shoulders headbanging to Broken Bones.
UTV: Has the Internet helped the band spread its music and message?
Oddy: Yes, most definitely; it gives more people the chance to see and hear you from their own homes. Also, the resurrection of "The Meatman!" it's actually Gavin Rickwood, who we met two years ago at a show in Sheffield. He offered his services [with another Gavin who designed the site] on the website etc. He's like a fifth member of the band, and we wouldn't have gotten this far without his help!
UTV: Do you think there is any contradiction in using "The System" [The Internet] to spread the message of fighting against "the system?"
Oddy: Sometimes you have to get within the system to fight it!
UTV: How many bands do you play in? And please name them all.
Oddy: I only play in Broken Bones and Conflict. Bones plays in Broken Bones and Discharge. Quiv and Dave are just in Broken Bones.
UTV: How do you manage to keep it all straight with

the other bands you all play in? How high of a priority is Broken Bones in comparison to all your other projects?
Oddy: Broken Bones is always a high priority. We just have to communicate with the other bands and make sure we don't double-book shows…which has already happened twice!
UTV: Do you play any other musical instruments?
Oddy: I can play a bit of rhythm guitar, and Bones is a great bass player [he played some shows on bass with the UK Subs], as you find with most guitarists, as they play [the bass] like a guitar!
UTV: If you had the time to learn any other musical instrument, what would it be and why?
Oddy: I would like to learn the piano, because it looks very hard to play. It can sound beautiful when played right, but I don't have the patience.
UTV: Are you pleased with your contributions to the world of Punk Rock?
Oddy: That makes it sound really corny! We don't feel as though we are contributing as we do it, because we love the music that we play, and we always write music to our own tastes. [But] yes…we're doing our bit!
UTV: What do you think of all this so-called "Punk Rock" put out by the big corporations? I refer to stupid crap like Yellowcard, New Found Glory, Good Charlotte etc.
Oddy: I couldn't really call them Punk Rock. It's just commercial music for the masses, but then again I don't think that Yellowcard is very well-known here in the UK. There's only Good Charlotte, Blink 182 and Green Day that are popular. I do like some of the Emo stuff like Fallout Boy and Midtown.
UTV: If you had the chance to speak personally with George Bush, Tony Blair, and Osama bin Ladin in person, what would you tell and/or ask them?
Oddy: Just one word directed to all of them...WHY!!??
UTV: Do you have any religious/spiritual beliefs? If so, what, and if not, why not?
Oddy: No, I'm totally agnostic! I believe that you live, you die, and it's what you do in-between that counts. People want something to believe in, and it makes them feel safe knowing(?) that when they die, they are going to a better place.
UTV: Food! I see the links for the artwork for the new album are listed as: vegancommunist. Are you a vegan? If so, please elaborate on the subject.
Oddy: Stan, who designed the cover [for the new CD] wrote to us offering his services, as he is a fan of the band. But as it happens, I am vegetarian and have been for 18 years…three of them were spent as a vegan. Vegancommunist.com is his website. But those are his views, and not necessarily the views of Broken Bones. Although personally, I do agree with the animal's side more than anything.
UTV: Do you think Communism can exist on the large scale? It seems to work on the small scale [as with the Jewish Kibbutz]. Do you think genuine communism was ever actually attempted? [I don't think the Soviet attempt was genuine communism…it was just another form of Fascism].
Oddy: Anarchy is really a form of Communism, and I believe in Anarchy as an ideal, but I don't think that it would work. Maybe it would work on a smaller scale. I do agree with you that the USSR's attempt was a just another form of dictatorship. X

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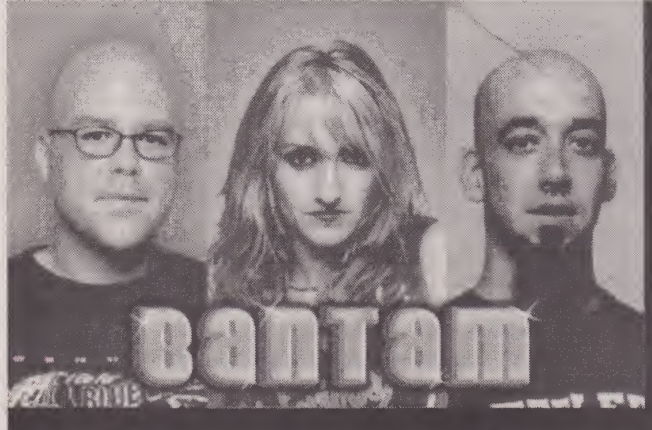

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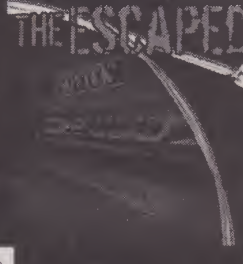

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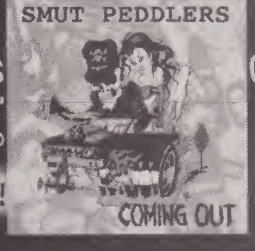
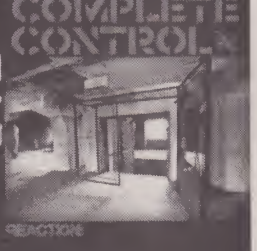


Complete Control
"Reaction"
cd



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Under the Volcano: What inspired you to start Indianola?
John Giddens: I was in a band called Life Before in '97, and we wanted a CD, so we started a label and put it out. I don't even sell the CD any more; I might send you an MP3 of it. I had been running a distro, setting up shows and trying to keep the scene alive. Shit was weird back in the day, it's not like it is today--Hardcore was an elite scene. When I would bring kids in, they would be hand-selected and groomed. I wouldn't throw a shitload of records in their laps; I would say, "Here is some Youth of Today and Endpoint, and some Threadbare," then tell them to master that and get back to me. Then I would move them on up through the gauntlet so when they were finally in the know about all the best bands and all the shit that was going on, they felt like it was sacred. It's not like today when a Korn kid can jump in the net and transform into a Hardcore kid in 30 minutes. I'm having serious trouble adjusting to this.
UTV: What the hell does Indianola mean?
John Giddens: Indianola was a street sign across the street from where my band recorded their demo. I wish I knew what it meant; had we known that this would turn into a thriving label, we would have put a little more time into [naming] it. When we finally got a logo that was decent, we had come up with the only thing that made sense: an arrowhead, because "Indian" is in the name
UTV: How did you go about starting your own label?
John Giddens: I had a badass band. I met this guy named Matt Shelton. He begged his parents, his friends, and everyone for money, and we headed down to Rob MacGregor's studio in Gainesville--he did all the old Hot Water Music albums and most of the old No Idea stuff--and cut an album over a weekend for $400 and pressed 1000. Never got distro. Then we did a female-fronted band that was made up of two guys that were in my band and this girl that could sing like a goddess-it kind of reminded me of Ashes. Next was a local area comp. We recorded over 25 bands... we never released it this time Then Matt was in a show in Tallahassee and saw this band Evergreen Terrace. We signed them, put them in the studio and got Quiggle to do the cover and hooked up with this guy named Caleb who does art and also presses CDs. He really helped us get rolling [caleb@bootcoregrafix.com]. He sometimes disappears for a couple of weeks, but he can take a CD from A-Z, and he floated some of our pressings when we didn't have any money
UTV: How many people do you currently have there? What do they do?
John Giddens: There is me and Matt, we own it... I spend most of my day talking to other

labels and mags and plants and business stuff, and bands when the beatdown stick needs to be brought out. Matt listens to their wants and concerns and girl problems, then tells them about his girl problems, which could be a whole interview. One morning he called me up he was back at [a girl's] house--I don't know why because she is always fucking other guys, but the new implants she bought had him back over--but on this morning he calls me up and said he found some dildos and sex stuff and naked pics-the whole nine yards. It was some hardcore stuff... handcuffs that had green mold and corrosion from the intense use, and huge dildos with veins coiled up in ziplock freezer bags with all the lube still on them--ladies, this is not a sanitary way to keep your toys--but the thing that messed him up was an anal thruster and harness. Later he confronted her about it and found out that she had been [using the device on a 35 year old man]. She said that she had to get really drunk to do it because she didn't like to. Matt's love life cracks us up.

There is Thomas [Giddens]... he packs up orders and promos, and he is about half-retarded, so when your stuff is messed up blame him. Sean [Rhorer] does publicity and Caleb [Olsen] does art. Right now I'm looking for a personal assistant to walk beside me and write down all the important stuff I say

UTV: To date, who has been the biggest band on the label?

John Giddens: Odd Project, then Evergreen Terrace, then Glory of This, then Across Five Aprils.

UTV: With so many labels popping up these days, do you find yourself in conflict with any of them when trying to sign bands?

John Giddens: Hell yes! Bitches want my bands.

UTV: Indianola has an extremely diverse roster. How different is it working a Screamo band like Odd Project vs. an all-out Metal attack of a band like Mercury Switch or Gunmetal Grey?

John Giddens: We do the same thing for both: mail out like 400 promos to mags and webzines, book ads... the band's attitude really has a lot to do with it. Most understand that they can't be Rock stars overnight. If they could, everyone would.

UTV: In the past, you've had bands that have broken up and then their members hit it big in future acts. For example, This Runs Through, which included [Spencer Chamberlain] a future member of Underoath. Do you see sales increases for your back catalog when something like this happens?

John Giddens: Yes, on sites and stores that advertise it, it helps a lot. Scott [Nun] from Sleeping By the Riverside is in Further Seems Forever.

UTV: What about a band like A Jealousy Issue, which features former members of Poison The Well, is there an instant interest? And if so, how much interest?

John Giddens: Duane [Hosein, vocals] starts out with so many good bands that blow up and leaves right before they blow up. He was in New Found Glory, Keepsake and Poison The Well, so he has a lot of fans. They have they worst van problems... every day, they would call me with a different van breakdown after their first van burned to ashes with all their stuff in it. They got a new van, had three tires go flat and muffler fall off one week into tour, and that was just the beginning.

UTV: Your bands seem to constantly tour. Do you find they're selling more CDs on the road, or in the stores?

John Giddens: Stores sell more by far... it's hard to touch kids in all the cities on tour, but having CDs in all the For Your Entertainments and Towers makes it where they can ride down the street and get it.

UTV: Tell me a little about working with Lumberjack as a distributor. Have you seen a big change since they merged with Mordam?

John Giddens: We just went to that convention in Vegas in February when all this was going down, and it was fun as shit, but I found out that the gift shop sold bottles of scotch. I remember that being fun for an hour or so, but then I blacked out and misbehaved a little. My group had Marc [Debiak] and Alex [Saavedra] from Eyeball, Jason [Dunn] from Facedown and Darren [Walters] from Jade Tree and about 10 other labels. I mounted the owner of a German label and rode him like a mechanical bull and passed out on Darren from Jade Tree's shoulder and drooled down it. Alex from Eyeball was drinking with me. A couple of hours later Lindsay [Falcone] from Lumberjack put me in bed after half an hour of vomiting. I woke up at 2am ready to gamble, but ended up getting more than I expected

UTV: One of the FAQs on your web site is "Are you a Christian label?" Is this really so big a topic that you had to address it?

John Giddens: Well, it is asked by a lot of kids. I really don't see what the big deal is, if a band is or isn't a Christian band. We sign both, and have no problem doing it. If they sound good, we'll sign them

UTV: What are your most recent releases, and what do we have to look forward to? Oingo Boingo, new Mercury Switch... the new Mercury Switch is one of the albums that I suggest for the jaded Hardcore kids that want something different--so much Metal, so much diversity, how can you go wrong? New Life In Your Way, which beaks down the wall again on Epic Hardcore--or Epicore, as the kids like to say. Indianola is the largest label that signs Epic Hardcore. Some of you may ask, " What is Epic Hardcore?" Well, if you're listening and can picture an emotional *Lord of the Rings* scene

going on in the background, then it's Epic Hardcore.
UTV: Tell me about the Oingo Boingo tribute. I love "Dead Man's Party," but is that band really popular enough to do a whole tribute album for?
John Giddens: Oingo Boingo has a cult following. I think the lineup will sell it: Finch, RX Bandits, Hello Goodbye, Plain White Ts and Reel Big Fish have all done really well.
UTV: In the current Internet era, what is the best way to promote a new artist?
John Giddens: Having My Space, HxCMP3 and Purevolume sites and getting kids to go there and listen. In the end, it should be the music that sells the album
UTV: Do you find sites like Friendster.com helpful or a hindrance to breaking a band?
John Giddens: They help. The more exposure that you can get--and the more girls that show half-naked pics that sign up on your list--the further you go.
UTV: I see that you have a few of your bands' videos listed on your website. Have you found that these videos are getting seen by the right people and are helping to promote the band, or do they just get done these days because everyone has one?
John Giddens: I'm in the process of getting them all converted into the format that I need to have it where they can play on Fuse and MTV2. It's called digi beta.
UTV: Glory of This got a slot on Warped Tour this year. Is Warped Tour all that, or just a lot of hype since there are so many bands playing?
John Giddens: No, it helps more that a lot of the fests like Hellfest and stuff, because it's different kids every day from all over that flood in and flood out.
UTV: Is there one major mistake you've made in the running of the label that you wish you could take back? And, how would you correct it?
John Giddens: I could have saved like $75,000 had I done things right the first time. Mistakes are not free, and they suck--I've made too many to even know how to correct them. There are like 20 bands I turned down that have now sold over 10,000 records--I'd like to change my mind on that
UTV: In closing, what's the best cure for a monster hangover?
John Giddens: Darvocet is a prescription painkiller; it's chemical name is propoxyphene. You take one of those in the morning with orange Gatorade, and you'll survive. Rule number one: make sure you consume a shitload of water before you pass out. You have to train your mind to do this, even when blacked out. It's taken me five days to get over a hangover before. Remember kids, once your liver is gone, you can never get it back. X

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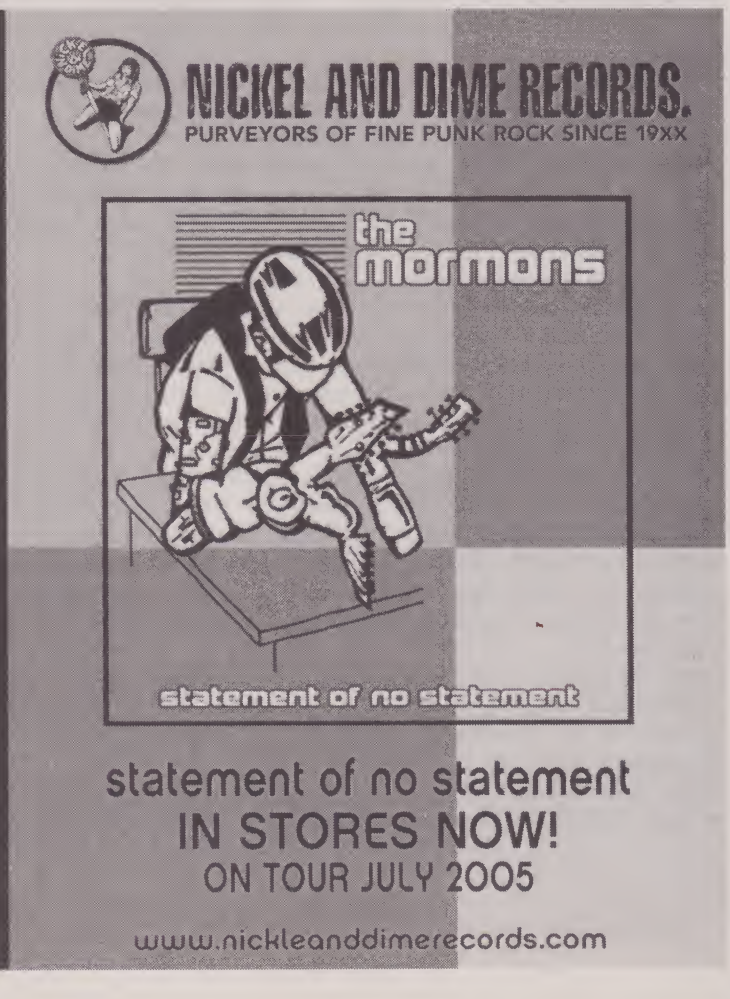

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At last! AT has resurrected the out-of-print treasures from these southern sludge legends! Collecting the "To A Frown" album, alongside the EPs "Unwilling to Explain" and "Wound", "Welcome to Violence" also includes new artwork, 2 unreleased versions of later tracks and liner notes by Jello Biafra, Hank Williams III, and members of Antiseen, Sourvein, and Eyehategod. A must!

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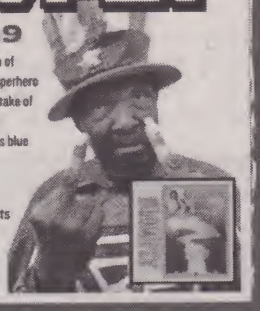
"The sonic assault these guys were putting on... was indeed a sight to behold" - Jeff Clayton, Antiseen
"I hadn't seen a band this physical since Black Flag" - Jello Biafra
"They were just plain great! - Jimmy Bower, Eyehategod

BLOWFLY
FAHRENHEIT 69



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Though some members of Lux Courageous are still in their teens, you wouldn't be aware of that while listening to *Reasons That Keep the Ground Near* [Triple Crown]; the band's pop-driven mix of melodic vocals, edgy guitars and atmospheric piano is something one might expect from an outfit with years more experience. Vocalist/guitarist PJ Tepe graciously discussed playing acoustic guitar at Hardcore shows, his issues with intimacy and why some girls might recognize the tunes their boyfriends are humming.

LUX COURAGEOUS

RICH BLACK

Under the Volcano: Chicks dig you guys, right? Admit it. Don't be ashamed. It's an animal thing, right?
PJ Tepe: Well, I don't really know about being "chick magnets." I will admit that a great deal of our fanbase MAY be female, but if we were "chick magnets" I would definitely have a much busier social life.

I'm not ashamed of it, but maybe those girls will listen to us with their boyfriends who will then not be able to stop singing our songs and hate us deeply. But then those guys will come around and tell me how they used to hate us and all of the sudden can't stop listening to us. Then our fanbase will be quite diverse.
UTV: I seem to remember that Mike Dubin brought you to the attention of Fred "Big Daddy" Feldman at Triple Crown after you self-released the *Lion EP.* What's the Dubin/Triple Crown/Lux Courageous connection, and how are the French involved?
PJ Tepe: Did Dubin tell you that? I think Fred would rather say that he found us first by himself. I think Dubin likes to tell Fred about bands and Fred ignores him for a while. Then Fred signs someone and doesn't explain to anyone how he found them. Then Dubin gets upset and Fred just doesn't care. So honestly, not even I know the factual story about our infiltration of the Triple Crown office. Things happen, and if they're in our favor, I like to forget about asking questions.
UTV: For a guy that's never been prescribed medication, I come up with some real doozies, don't I?
PJ Tepe: Well, if I can answer the question by saying something about the odd relationship between Fred and Dubin, then I would call it a "doozie" or "doozy"... whatever the singular form of the word may be.
UTV: Tell me about showing up to Hardcore shows with acoustic guitars. Do people enjoy that type of thing?
PJ Tepe: Honestly, I tend to cringe when I see anyone at a show with just an acoustic guitar. It's like, "Great, this guy is doing the Dashboard [Confessional] thing AGAIN." I think when we started, having two people let us get away from the comparisons a little bit. Even though EVERYONE brought up the name Dashboard when describing us, I think we snuck through the cracks and got the chance to become our own thing.
UTV: How did Justin Williams, your piano player, join the band?
PJ Tepe: Well, Justin originally started playing with us in the spring of '03. We recorded the *Lion EP* that summer, but Justin had decided right before then to try and do another band. So he recorded with us, and then we played as a four-piece for another five months when Justin came to his senses and asked to join back up.
UTV: I was just watching a documentary about a well-known Hardcore band, and the singer said something like, "Some guy rolling around on the floor whining about his girlfriend leaving him is NOT Hardcore." Care to comment?
PJ Tepe: I really don't even care what someone thinks about my music. I don't think I whine, and I think a lot of bands like us are getting away from the "whine about girls" thing. I know for myself, I got to a certain age and a certain point where my songwriting started become more mature and I made the conscious decision to try my best to come up with something that no one's ever heard before. It may have had something to do with the people who influenced me starting to

grow up and become adults. I can't promise that I'm not going to write a love song or a song about a girl, but I'm going to try my hardest to say things in a way so that my words can't be compared to anyone else's. And, PS....I'm not trying to be Hardcore. I don't think I could write a tough enough song to be classified as Hardcore.

UTV: The song "Concrete (Broadway)" seems to draw very obviously from personal experience, as many of your songs do. Did someone actually live on Broadway, at some point? What are some of the circumstances surrounding that song?

PJ Tepe: "Concrete" is about my first semester at a school in Manhattan. It was a real tough time for me, mentally and emotionally. I was living IN New York City, but i just couldn't find anything to keep me content. It was a great thing for me to do because I experienced a great deal. SO many things happened that I never imagined would, but it wasn't where I was supposed to be after those few months. It was draining me, and I had to come home for a while.

UTV: Okay...so, if you ARE letting people into the deepest, darkest recesses of your inner being through your art, isn't there a danger of losing your psychic equilibrium as fans tear off your most private pieces and devour them? I'm thinking Kurt Cobain. Dave Chapelle. Zoloft.

PJ Tepe: The more straight-forward lyrics on the record are the old songs that we've been playing for about three years now. I was much younger and still coming into my own writing style. Some of the newer songs, like "Wearing Dangerous" and "Safe at Last" are much more vague. I think I came to a point with my writing where I didn't want people knowing the WHOLE story. I want people to know where I've been, so they can listen to the song and say, "I know what that's like," but I want them to interpret the situations themselves and apply the words to their own experiences.

UTV: Judging from my previous question, do I have intimacy issues, or do I just consider most people assholes?

PJ Tepe: I have intimacy issues. I think I'll be married with two children and still have intimacy issues, so don't ask me if you have issues. I'm
probably the worst person for you to ask.

UTV: This last question is dedicated to my friends, Steve from Dairy Barn and Rob from Ironworks Digital: How it feeeeeeel?

PJ Tepe: I have no idea what this question means. X

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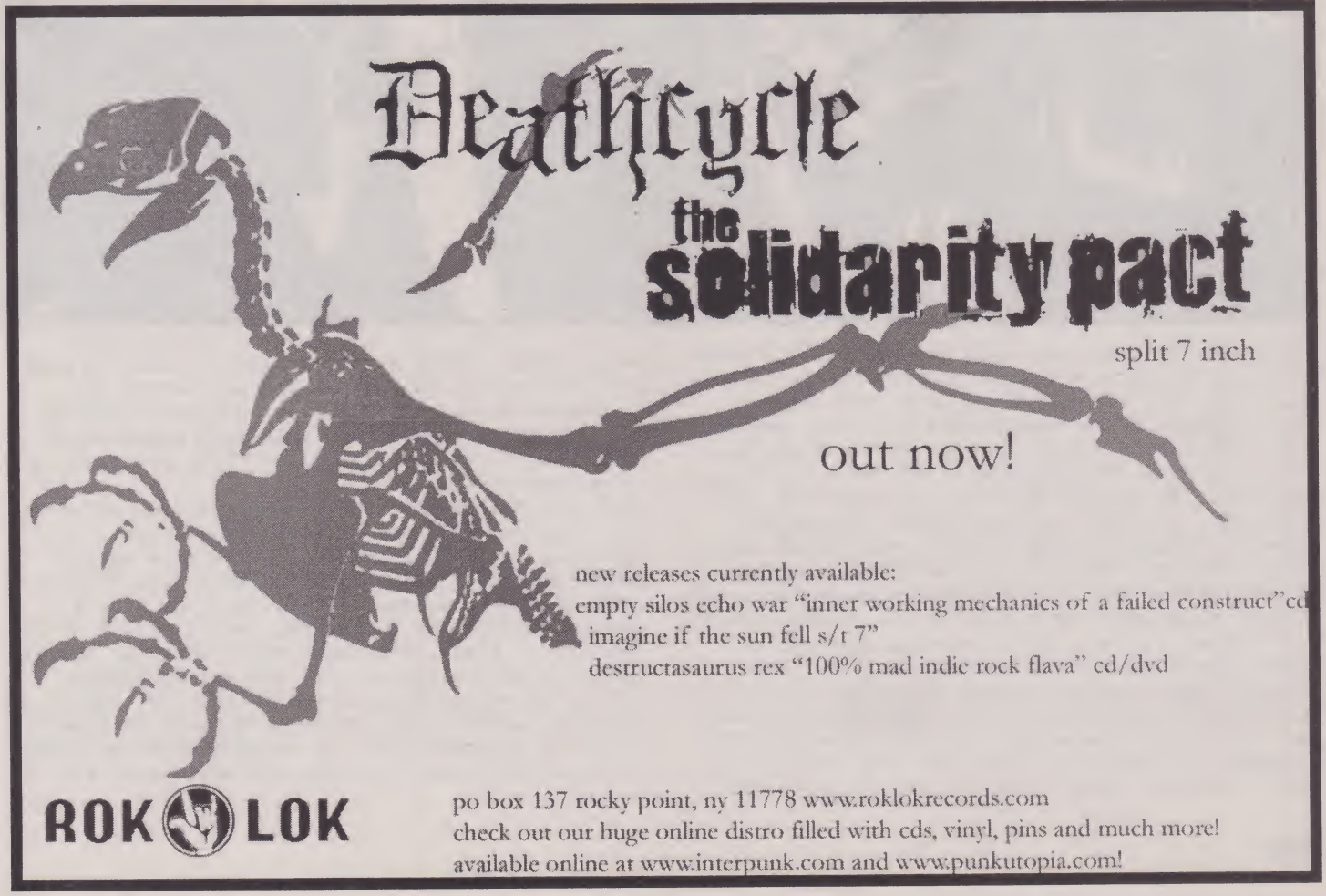

SMOKE OR FIRE

DALE MANCHURIAN

The band Jericho–later Jericho RVA–released two EPs before having to change its name for legal reasons. Now going under the name Smoke or Fire, the band's debut full-length, *Above the City* [Fat Wreck Chords], fuses abrasive rhythms to pockets of melody. Dale Manchurian spoke to singer/guitarist Joe McMahon about the band's name change, Thomas Jefferson and getting drunk before playing a show with Straight Edge bands.

Under the Volcano: How long have you been a band for? Can you give a bit of an overview for people and [tell us] why you chose to go with Fat?
Joe McMahon: We've been a band for seven years. I moved to Boston for college in 1997 and met up with the guys from Born Ugly, who were starting a new band. We put out *When the Battery Dies*, our first EP, in 1999. We recorded our second EP, *Worker's Union,* in 2001, and it was picked up by Iodine Records. We moved to Richmond, Virginia, shortly after that to concentrate on touring, and Iodine went under very shortly after that, leaving us without a label. After touring nonstop, we spent about six months writing our first full-length. New Alliance studios in Boston fronted us the studio time to record the new record because we didn't have the money to do it ourselves. We shopped it around to labels and started to get a good response. When Fat Mike called I said yes right there. There wasn't a need to call the guys and discuss it, because we had all wanted the record to be on Fat. Fat puts out great records, they're great people, and extremely generous to their bands. You really do feel like you're part of a family with them.
UTV: How does your band go about writing songs?
Joe McMahon: It depends. Sometimes Jeremy [Cochran, guitar] and I will bring in songs or parts of songs to the band and we'll all work on them together. Sometimes I'll have the lyrics written before the music, and sometimes I'll write the lyrics after. Sometimes we'll just jam out at practice and decide we like the way something sounds so we continue to write to it. On *Above the City* we decided none of the songs were finished until we recorded them. We changed parts of songs over and over until we were all satisfied. We

wrote 24 songs for the record, recorded 16, and 12 made the record.
UTV: If you weren't in a band, what would you be doing?
Joe McMahon: I've never really thought about that. Life probably wouldn't be much different. I went to art school, so I'd probably be doing art, and my life would be the same. I'd be poor and working at a shitty job, just like I am now.
UTV: If you had to interview a--writer, actor, historical person, musician, philosopher--who would you pick and why?
Joe McMahon: That's tough. Maybe Thomas Jefferson, although I've heard Benjamin Franklin was more of a drinker. Our bassist, Ken [Gurley], was telling me about his original draft of the Declaration of Independence, which was turned down, and how it involved abolishing slavery, among other things. I've read that he also wrote at the end of his life a lot about his concerns of what direction the country was already heading, where if what are now corporations gained all the power, then the US's fight for independence would have been for nothing. If he already saw that coming towards the end of his life, it should tell you something. So, either Thomas Jefferson or Fugazi I guess.
UTV: Just how hard is it to come up with a new band name?
Joe McMahon: It's impossible. It didn't matter to me what we picked because we had been Jericho for so long that nothing we chose would sound right to me, and we had such a short time to come up with something because the new record needed to go to press. I knew it was the same for people who had listened to us for so long. People who listened to Jericho wouldn't like the new name, and people who had never heard of Jericho wouldn't think twice about it.
UTV: What's the most far fetched accusation a fan has made towards your band?
Joe McMahon: People accused me of lip-synching when we played *Saturday Night Live*, but that's a bunch of shit. Seriously though, we haven't really dealt with that. Years ago we were playing a show that had some Straight Edge bands playing, and we showed up really drunk--I mean, the van doors opened and Jeremy and I literally fell out onto the sidewalk passed out. We didn't realize Straight Edge bands were playing, and I guess it was kind of offensive to some kids. Some of the kids starting going around telling everyone there that we drink and drive to all of our shows. Our drummer, Nick [Maggiore] was driving though. He doesn't usually drink, and would never drink and drive. The kids were buying our t-shirts so that they could write "Jericho are a bunch of drunks" on them, and were breaking our CDs. It was adorable.
UTV: What do you want to accomplish with your band?
Joe McMahon: We want to have fun; it's why we've been doing this for so long. We just love to play. Being on Fat allows us to write what we want and be able to tour with bands we love. It's a freedom I think some bands give up or take for granted. We want kids to come out to the shows and feel safe and part of something good-the way we felt going out to see our favorite bands growing up. Other than touring, we just want to continue making records that we want to listen to and not be afraid to put out music that may not be popular or say things that may make people unhappy. I hope we never write a song we love and say, "This can't go on the record," or "this doesn't sound like us."
UTV: Who is the band tyrant? Who is the agreeable one? Who is the complainer?
Joe McMahon: We all have our moments. We get along really well on tour, and that is so important-writing and practicing can get stressful, but I think that's to be expected when four people obviously have an opinion on how something should sound. Ken is definitely the easiest going of the group. I think I've seen him get angry once in all the years I've known him.
UTV: What is the most "Rock n' Roll Spinal Tap" moment that your band has had?
Joe McMahon: We've had a few too many... Jeremy falling through the stage during the intro to a song was amazing. He pulled himself out of the stage and went right into the song. There was one really good Spinal Tap moment two years ago, though. We had just finished up the Avail/Casualties tour in Virginia Beach and we were heading back to Richmond. We decided to treat ourselves to some Wendy's on the way home, so we pulled off the exit we thought was heading there. We ended up pulling up to a military base gate with about five marines with M-16s looking really unhappy with us. We couldn't turn around because that would have looked really suspicious, so we pulled up to them. They asked for all of our IDs and wanted to know what the hell we were doing. We told them we just wanted to go to Wendy's. I guess you had to be there.
UTV: Would you let your music be used in a car commercial?
Joe McMahon: No way.
UTV: When do you think it's time for a band to stop playing?
Joe McMahon: When it's not fun anymore.
UTV: Do you hang out with each other outside of band time?
Joe McMahon: Yeah. Until recently we've all lived together off and on for years. Jeremy and I have known each other since little league, and Ken and Nick grew up in New Hampshire together going to the same shows, so we've all known each other before the band. It's like having three other brothers. You argue and bicker at times, but you're always going to be friends.
UTV: Do you buy each other birthday presents?
Joe McMahon: Alcohol is a gift, and we give it to each other every birthday.
UTV: What is one band that you love that nobody knows about but they should?
Joe McMahon: I think American Steel is one of the best bands that has ever played. *Rogue's March* is an amazing record, and I don't think they got the credit the deserved for it. When I saw them live in Boston a few years ago, my friends and I were freaking out like idiots while they played and nobody else in the room seemed to even know who they were. They had a huge influence on our band.
X

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Strapping Young Lad is one of the many musical projects of Canada's most productive member of the Metal community, Devon Townsend. From his past work with legendary guitarist Steve Vai, to production work, on to his current level of musical output, Townsend has kept quite busy while establishing a name for himself as a standard bearer for Metal music. Strapping Young Lad's latest album, *Alien* [Century Media], showcases Townsend and crew's ability to be devastatingly heavy and creative, a rare feat amongst many current Metal acts. This summer, the band is part of the inaugural Sounds of the Underground tour, alongside such bands as Opeth, Lamb of God and Unearth.

STRAPPING YOUNG LAD

KevTV

Under the Volcano: You toured with Steve Vai when you were about 16. How'd that come about? What's something you learned from that experience, either regarding playing or something off stage?
Devin Townsend: I sent out a demo and luck was on my side. I consider that experience much like going to university for music. I learnt much about band dynamics, production, recording, guitar playing, and my vocals. I was very fortunate to get that opportunity, and I value it greatly.
UTV: The new album, *Alien*, is punishing, and the focus of the album is the brutality of the music, not some grand epical lyrical theme. What role do lyrics play for you? Are they words that provide an additional texture to the music, or do your lyrics hold a deeper artistic importance?
Devin Townsend: I think lyrics reflect the current state of mind, and as a result...the lyrics make up a theme, and that's more important than the parts. I don't think anything I have to say is of any more or less importance than anyone else. I just think of the voice--mine or anyone else's--as an instrument, lyrics, emotion and energy as elements.
UTV: This is the first SYL album written as a band. Sometimes when bands open up the process, chemistry can be lost--cough, cough St. Anger--but it seems with *Alien*, SYL has intensified. What differences in the process of writing and recording this album do you feel might have contributed to this?
Devin Townsend: That is actually a little off centre; Byron [Stroud, bass] and Jed [Simon, guitar] were out of the country for the making of this record. They came in and learned their parts so we could have our collective energy, and Jed did contribute riffs...but, Gene [Hoglan, drums] and I bashed out the arrangements, and I kind of took control of the lyrics. Doing our DVD gave me--as a producer--an idea objectively [of] what Strapping Young Lad was all about, and *Alien* was a real go in that direction. Gene and I really connected during the writing, and we "jammed" for the first time (!). *Alien* is kind of the result of that.
UTV: With your involvement in a variety of musical projects, when you are writing, do you just write songs and see what comes out, then assign the song to a particular project, or do you write with one project in mind?
Devin Townsend: One project at a time, one song at a time when I'm really going for it. They come out best when they roll around in my head for awhile, when it becomes a kind of soundtrack for my current goings-ons.
UTV: What prompted you to currently make SYL your main focus?
Devin Townsend: It was the outlet that seemed most appropriate at that time of music creation. It also seems most focused to do one thing at a time. When I do the next Devin Townsend Band album, that will be the focus and so on. I follow it because it feels relieving to create.
UTV: Your musical output varies between projects. Are there musical ventures you haven't taken but want to sometime in the future?
Devin Townsend: I want to start mixing more, and I'm also interested in electronic music and vibrations. I have lots of aspirations and want to do a solid job at many of them.

UTV: The lineup of Strapping Young Lad has some prominent names, and Gene is held in high esteem as a drummer. You play a lot of instruments, but not drums; what role do you feel drums play in a band's overall sound?
Devin Townsend: I'm very aware of rhythm, and have a really strong sense of where I want the one and where the snare should go. Drums, kick and snare are the foundation. Gene and Ryan [Van Poederooyen] from DTB are both great, and I love solid tempo and good stick sound against the skins. I view rhythm as a circle. I'm really into good drummers.
UTV: Does being Canadian help or hurt your ability to be a musician? I ask because of the Canadian law that promotes homegrown artists.
Devin Townsend: I don't know if it makes much difference; the shows are good here and in America, so I don't know if it affects Metal directly. I don't have a Juno, and AI don't have a grammy, so I just do my best.
UTV: Years back, it seemed that a lot of bands from the Vancouver area knew each other and shared resources. You're credited with steering Frontline Assembly toward a more guitar-driven sound on *Millennium*, for instance, and you've also produced Skinny Puppy remixes. What kind of music scene does Vancouver have these days?
Devin Townsend: Vancouver is cool for me because it's relatively quiet. There are a lot of scenes here, but they don't seem to collide that often. I met Rhys [Fulber] and the Frontline camp when Dino [Cazares] from Fear Factory couldn't get into Canada to play on the record and recommended Rhys call me. I keep in touch with him. There's a cool scene for production and engineering here, however.
UTV: You've produced records by acts such as Lamb of God and Soilwork--any producing gigs in your immediate future? How did your interest in producing develop? What bands would you kill to work with?
Devin Townsend: I love production, and I love trying to help bring a band together to be the best it can be. I used to play with 4-track recorders growing up, and I got lots of early attention from it. I've always been fascinated by studios and sound manipulation. And now, digital is an instrument unto itself. I'll work with the right bands, and there's no one I'm currently courting.
UTV: In the late '90s, you started Hevy Devy Records to release your solo work. What kind of distribution does HDR have? Would you ever consider releasing someone else's music?
Devin Townsend: It's always been an outlet solely for my solo stuff, and stuff you can't get in stores. We are distributed over the internet through our website, Hevydevy.com, as well as through Inside Out music as well. We have distribution through Roadrunner in Australia and Sony in Japan.
UTV: What occupies your time when you're not involved in music? Does time like this even exist?
Devin Townsend: I have lots of little hobbies and habits that are rituals daily that give me enough time to recharge for when I need it.
UTV: One last question: Love?
Devin Townsend: Abso-friggin'-lutely. X

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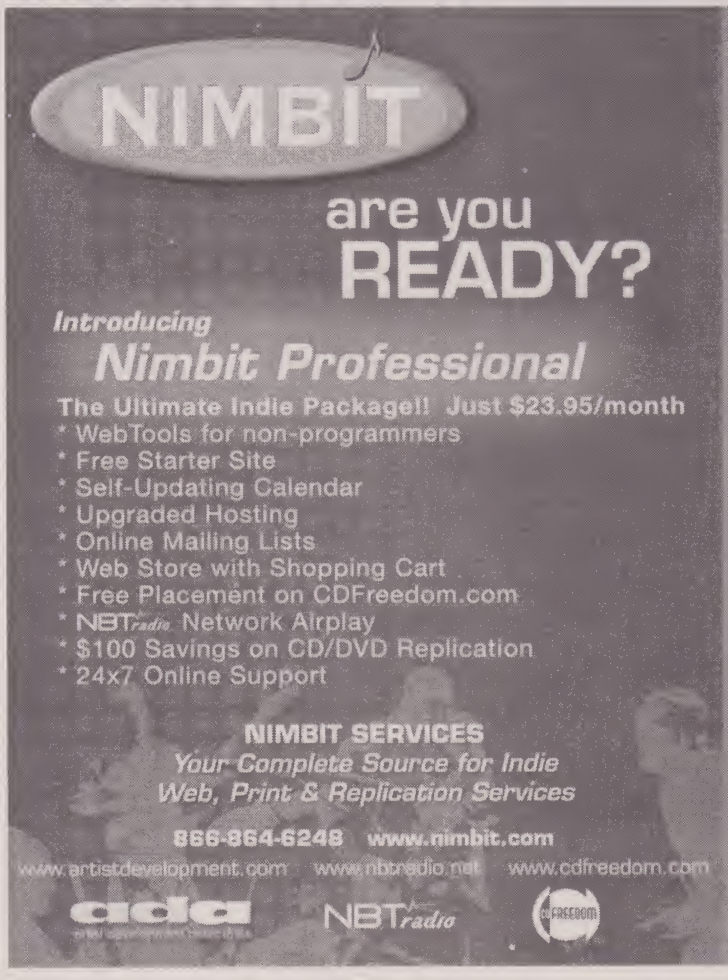

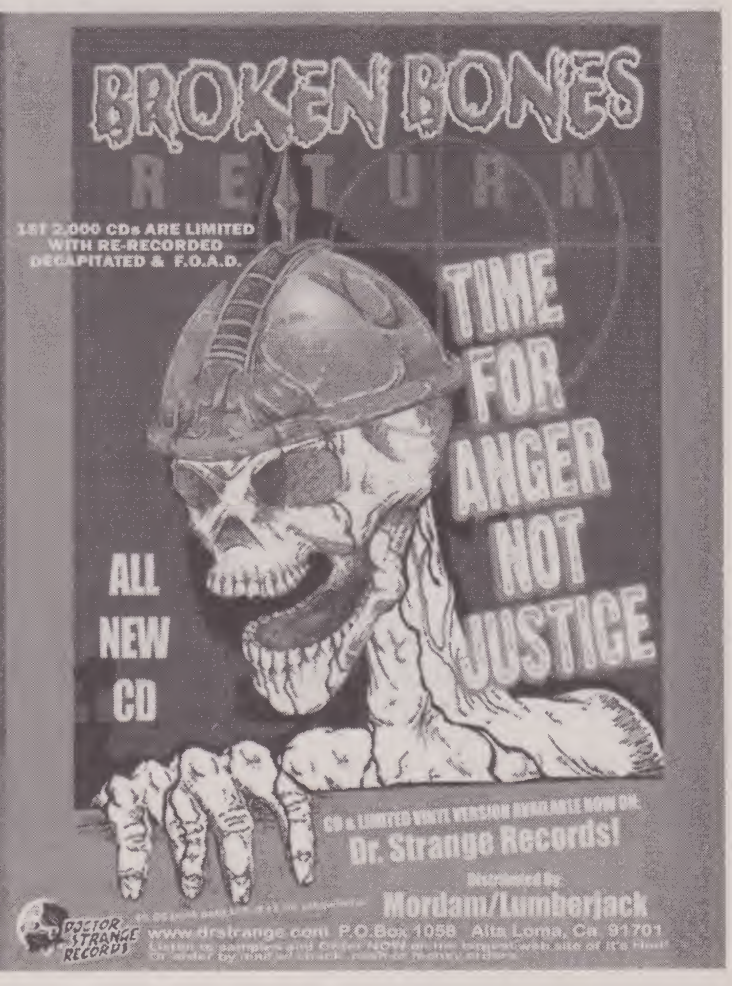

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Lineup changes, scattered recordings and a reputation for chaotically sloppy live sets have been a bane of sorts that has followed the Massachusetts-based Transistor Transistor. Now, armed with an explosive new album titled *Erase All Name and Likeness* [Level Plane] engineered by Kurt Ballou of Converge at the infamous God City recording studio, Transistor Transistor are primed to turn the naysayers into true believers. Guitarist Brad Wallace was kind enough to answer my prying questions about the band's current state of affairs.

TRANSISTOR TRANSISTOR

Mike Andriaus

Under the Volcano: First off, after a month of touring Europe following as US tour with labelmates Hot Cross and The Holy Shroud in support of *Erase All Name and Likeness*, how does it feel to be home? Overall, how would you describe the experience?

Brad Wallace: We just got back from Europe, and it feels great to be home. I think the longest I'd been on tour before this was 28 days or so, and this was well into the 70 day range, so it was definitely a challenge--but also a challenge easily met. Touring with the guys that are currently in the band makes taking on such a hefty endeavor relatively easy. I've definitely been in bands with people who I never could have lasted that long with. I'm still struggling to find the words to describe the experience of touring the States for six weeks, and then going to Europe for another four right afterwards. Touring for that long--and especially having the end be in foreign lands--definitely put me in a mindset that I've never been in before. I think it was a positive one, but it was a very new experience for me, so I haven't even been able to describe it to my close friends, or even the other guys in the band. I think one thing that I can say for sure though is that even though the tour was long and somewhat tiring, it still felt great to know that I was pushing myself to work hard at doing something I love, and that going out and playing every night was the logical extension of how hard we worked on putting out the new album.

UTV: Being involved in Punk and Hardcore myself since the mid '90s, I've noticed that Europeans really "get it" when it comes to networking and utilizing DIY resources to their potential. Many records that come out in Europe are split released as cooperative efforts between sometimes as many as five labels, which not only lowers the initial investment per label, but also heavily increases distribution. I've also noticed that a co-ops and squats are still a means of hosting shows. In America, it seems young turks are starting up record labels daily. Considering Transistor Transistor has two European tours under its belt, in what ways do you feel Americans might be able to benefit from studying the European Punk/Hardcore scene?

Brad Wallace: Americans could learn a lot from many of the European show promoters. When we tour in Europe we play with a PA that is competent for a band as loud as we are--at the very least, and most of the time we get a full sound check. We also get fed dinner and breakfast at every show, and not just some spaghetti either--some seriously good vegan food that will keep you healthy and give you energy to play well that night. We also always have good accommodations for a place to stay. Europeans just seem to take touring bands more seriously; they don't take it for granted that it's expensive to go on tour, and that you work hard to go on tour. They're not afraid to take money issues seriously, and certainly don't think that just because you're a punk band that you have to be a starving artist that's willing to just put up with whatever someone gives you. I think the fact that they take such good care of you really leads to a more positive environment, where you really feel like people want you to be there, you feel comfortable, and you have energy because you got a good night's sleep and ate well. This all leads to playing much better every night, and with more enthusiasm. Like most things, when both parties involved work hard, both parties get better results.

Europeans are also smart enough to only put two or three bands on a show instead of five or six. An important part of this seems [to be] that more people are willing to work together over there. At most of these shows you have at least two or three people taking care of the important organizational aspects of the shows, if not five or more. Somebody is doing the sound, somebody is doing the door,

somebody is cooking food and somebody is working the bar. Basically, most punk shows are run in Europe like a small club, but without all the bullshit one usually associates with Rock clubs. It's a beautiful thing, really. I also think that they have some tremendous advantages over us though, in their ability to have squats, and also not having to deal with drinking ages. If Americans had a great capability to take over abandoned buildings and make them Rock clubs and not have to contend with ridiculous laws governing the sale of alcohol things would be easier, but there are still things that can be learned from the European scene that would make DIY touring infinitely better in the US.

UTV: It's apparent on *Erase All Name and Likeness* that you guys really went out on a limb to explore new songwriting possibilities. It retains all of the chaotic elements that I enjoyed about previous material, but there's something totally new going on with this recording. After a few listens I was able to pick out lots of different sounds going on--not only contemporary Hardcore and Punk styles, but also traces of coarse-sounding '90's Indie Rock a la Jesus Lizard and Drive Like Jehu. Am I wrong in that assumption, or was there a conscious effort to stretch out a bit creatively when going into writing this album?

Brad Wallace: It's hard to say how much was conscious and how much was not. At the time when this record started to be written, the band hadn't written any new material in a very long time and had since gained two new members, so in some ways--conscious or unconscious--the music was destined to move in a new direction. I don't think that any specifics were talked about in terms of songwriting, but we all agreed that our main goal was to write a well-conceived album, and that we wanted to push ourselves a little bit in the process. I think we were just pretty open-minded and didn't stray away from territory that we hadn't dealt with before. I think we were even often most excited when we realized we'd written a song that had little in common with old Transistor songs. Nobody was interested in writing the same songs over and over again, yet we were still interested in consistency and some of the classic tenants of good songwriting. I think in some ways what it comes down to is that we also listen to a lot of different stuff and are interested in exploring many of the facets we like about quite an array of different music. I'd be a liar if I said I wasn't listening to a lot of Jehu and Jesus Lizard around the time the record was written, so you've got me there. In some ways I think some of the result of this album was just the band taking the songwriting process that much more seriously. We practiced a lot and really took the time to refine the songs, so a lot more care and effort were put into them. I think taking this approach naturally led to stretching out creatively and exploring new aspects of what we were capable of.

UTV: What was it like recording with Kurt Ballou, whom most readers will readily identify as the six string slasher of Converge? Would you work with him again, given the opportunity?

Brad Wallace: Recording with Kurt was great. Every day I would wake up earlier than I had to because I was so excited about recording. I think we were a really good match, and we sing his praises often. He was the right man for the job. We're a loud, noisy Rock band, and he knew exactly how to capture that. He also had some excellent advice that we took advantage of in the studio regarding sound and a few arrangement details. He also created a great environment to work in. I think when it comes time to record again, we'll certainly be calling him up.

UTV: The word on the street is that Level Plane will be re-releasing your splits with Light the Fuse and Run and The Wolves in one comprehensive package. What's the story behind this release? Will it also include the split with Aim of Conrad or your first single?

Brad Wallace: This CD will probably come out in the Fall, and will include the splits with Wolves, Light the Fuse and Run, Aim of Conrad, and Mannequin, as well as some demo tracks that have never been released. All the bands that the split records are with are essentially defunct, and putting this CD together is a good way to let the vinyl go out of print and make it easier for a lot of people to get all the old Transistor material at a cheaper price than having to hunt down all the rare releases. There may be a few surprises for the really serious fans as well.

UTV: Level Plane releases music from some of finest names in modern progressive Punk and Hardcore, with top notch packaging to boot as well. How would describe your relationship with Level Plane? And, how does feel to be apart of roster that is so diverse?

Brad Wallace: Level Plane is pretty much the perfect label for us. Greg [Drudy, owner] did everything we could have expected and more when it came to putting out this record. He really gave us a ton of support and all the resources we needed to make as good of a record as we possibly could. He clearly works really hard at the label, and when he puts that much on the line for you it just makes you want to work that much harder. I think it's a great relationship when people inspire each other to work hard for each other. I also really like a lot of the bands on the label, and the fact that the label has become even more diverse is only a positive thing. I love it that we're a loud, noisy band, and yet we're on the same label as an eloquent Indie Rock band like The Holy Shroud and such a beautiful and catchy band as the One AM Radio. I really hope that in the next year or so people start to realize the quality and diversity of the current Level Plane roster.

UTV: Last year, when Transistor Transistor was down to only two members, did you think the band would be coming to an end? What was the driving force in keeping Transistor Transistor alive?

Brad Wallace: Having been a new member of that band at that point, I remember that time being far more exciting than scary. Even before I was asked to join the band I was confident that the band would keep going in a capacity that was positive, and I couldn't be more pleased to be a part of that. I think the driving force was that the band wasn't done yet; people still wanted to tour and write songs with each other. The band has had many members over a relatively short period of time, and James [Moller, drums] and I were very close friends of the band, so bringing us into the mix was a very

natural and easy process. The band barely skipped a beat.

UTV: With that being said, do you feel confident that this current lineup has some longevity?

Brad Wallace: I feel pretty good about saying that the current lineup has longevity as a distinct possibility. We just went on a 10 week tour and there was very little agitation and we all got along pretty well. If we can get through that, then we should be able to get through most things. Then again, people's lives do change over time and the band could cease to become a priority in their lives at some point. Right now, I think everybody feels really good about it, and we're going to work really hard at it, as long as it makes sense to do so. This lineup gets along a lot better than past lineups, and seems to be more on the same page. We've also really made it a point to be respectful of each other and really work on our communication skills to ensure the continued friendship of the band. It's important to learn from your mistakes, and everybody involved currently is capable of doing that.

UTV: Lyrically speaking, on *Erase All Name and Likeness* there seems to be a theme of identity and finding one's identity being explored. Most notably on "Power Chord Academy" you seem to touch upon identity within Punk and Hardcore. Do you care to touch upon why this theme was explored?

Brad Wallace: I didn't write the lyrics for the record, but in taking a lot of time in writing the record I certainly saw them as they evolved and had a lot of conversations with Nat [Coghlan, vocals/guitar] about what the lyrics were about. The record certainly is about identity issues, and I think Nat focused a lot on the events of his life leading up to writing the record, and things that were going on while we wrote the record. In the end, it's just an honest evaluation of one's self. I think Nat took a lot of time to examine himself, and try and make big changes with some of the things he was unhappy with. This required a lot of honesty and self-reflection. Since so much of his time is spent being in a band and playing music, naturally that aspect of his life--and specifically the creative aspects of being an artist with an audience--have to come into question as well. I think in general the lyrics are about relationships, alienation, and sometimes trying to figure out if you're any better than the people you choose to associate with.

UTV: What does the future hold for Transistor Transistor? Is it more touring, relaxing or back to working the daily grind?

Brad Wallace: I'm pretty much broke as of today, so it's definitely back to the daily grind for awhile. I think we'll be touring the US again in the Fall though, and maybe [we'll] even try to head up to Canada at some point. We're still really excited about playing music and having people hear the new record, so once we save up some money you'll see us on the road again. www.transistortransistor.com usually has all the answers.

UTV: In closing, tell me something that no one knows about you.

Brad Wallace: Our obsession with Boglins runs deeper than anyone could ever imagine. X

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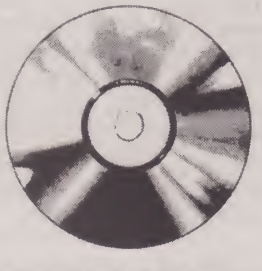

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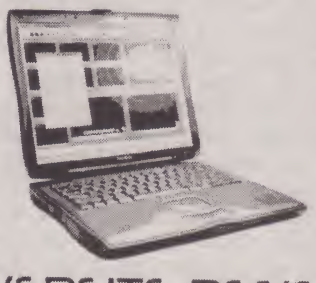

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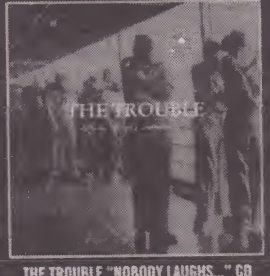

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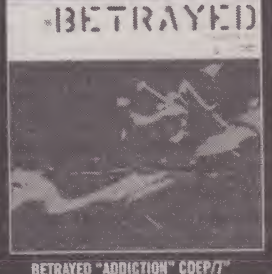

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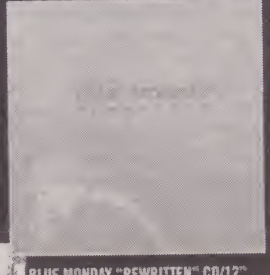

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Audio Reviews

A Life Once Lost "Hunter" *(Ferret, 167 Wayne St. # 409, Jersey City, NJ 07302).* I thought the last full-length these guys did was powerful, but ultimately just blended into the crowd of chaos and violence that has become the Metalcore scene—there just wasn't enough to distinguish them from most of the other bands. With the release of *Hunter* that's no longer a problem; the album is a hundred times better than the last. The vocals are far more powerful and distinct. The band has also given up a bit of the technical side of their songwriting in favor of giving the songs slightly better structure. The album consists of 11 tracks of controlled chaos that was once reserved for bands like Dillinger Escape Plan and Burnt By The Sun. While the vocals are spit venom, the playing is precise and clearly set in a more permanent mode than some of the band's early offerings. Being as blown away by the album as I was, I can do nothing but ardently demand you give this a chance. (CD)**-Myk**

A Northern Chorus "Bitter Hands Reign" *(Sonic Unyon, www.sonicunyon.com).* Presently, on the front of this CD is a sticker that reads "RIYD: Sigur Ros, The Frames, GSY!BE, Slowdive." Truthfully, of those four artists, I've only heard Sigur Ros, who I find to be boring and self-indulgent. However, the "swelling string arrangements, wistful vocals" and "beautiful melancholy" also mentioned on that sticker are what make this a disc that fans of Dearly Departed ought to pick up. There isn't a whole lot of variety on *Bitter Hands Reign*, yet this is the rare sort of release that ought to speak to an indie-rockers **and** fans of those *Pure Moods* compilations alike. At best, A Northern Chorus will put you in a relaxed state of mind. At worst, A Northern Chorus will put you into a deep sleep. And who can't use a little extra sleep nowadays? (CD)**-Paltrowitz**

A Perfect Murder "Rehearsal" *(Cyclop Media, 16 Du Charron Levis Quebec, G6V 7X5, Canada).* This is one of those odd little albums that just seems to appear out of nowhere. I've never even heard of the label for that matter. Technically, this CD consists of five tracks: two originals, a Black Sabbath cover, a Slayer cover, and a medley of Metallica covers— that sound like Pantera doing them at points —are the guts of the CD. The band actually does the covers some real justice and you can tell they're fans, but I don't know that the CD was necessary. These strike me as the kind of tracks that become bonus tracks on other releases, especially when you consider the band is now on Victory and would get a lot more exposure through that. A Perfect Murder is one of those bands I don't dislike, but don't love either; they're kind of just **there**, and this isn't so impressive it'll change your mind—it's just a fun thing you might throw on a mix tape with a bunch of other stuff just to get listened to every now and again. (CD)**-Myk**

A Static Lullaby "Faso Latido" *(Columbia, 550 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022).* *Faso Latido* is this band's major label debut, but that's the biggest significant difference from the band's last album. These new 13 tracks are not as blazingly Metal-influenced, but the Rock end of the songwriting is a little more edgy. Both the clean vocals and the screams still remain, just not as many screams. The song writing has expanded; after all, even the band admits they aren't as angry as they were when they did their last full-length. A Static Lullaby has stepped more into the realm of what I consider true Emo. The band is now playing something similar to bands like Lifetime and early Down By Law. They have their moving moments, but the distinctive punk elements remain from what was called Hardcore Punk. With this album it's conceivable that you'll see these guys surpass contemporaries like Thrice and Thursday as the dominant bands of the scene. A Static Lullaby may have eased up a bit, but only in sound, not in truly strong songs. (CD)**-Myk**

About the Fire "Rites of Passage" (*Happy Couples Never Last, POB 36997, Indianapolis, IN 46236*). The opening riff of this CD is very familiar, but I can't place it—maybe that's because I've heard it a million times already. The rest of the album pretty much all sounds the same—like Taking Back Sunday with a yelling Kermit the Frog for vocals (which are just plain awful). The lyrics are pretty much all rewrites of each other, concentrating on the death of vocalist Fat Sammy's ex-bandmate from Better Off Dead. I guess it's all supposed to be EMOtional, however I don't feel anything but annoyed at the generic quality of the music, the lousy singing and the dull lyrics. Fashion-core types will like it, though. (CD)**-chuck.foster**

Adolescents "The Complete Demos 1980-1986" *(Frontier, POB 22, Sun Valley, CA 91353).* Almost 25 years after the release of the indelibly influential Adolescents' self-titled "blue album," Frontier Records has blessed our ears with this raucously rambunctious compilation. The Adolescents came snarling out of Fullerton, California in 1980 and soon made an overwhelming impact on the So-Cal Punk scene with their catchy, yet abrasive, songs and their darkly poignant, caustically observant lyrics. With absolutely nothing to lose and even less to gain, the Adolescents were the musical embodiment of boredom, youthful rage, suburban disenchantment, and bratty wide-eyed rebellion. They were (and still are!) the ultimate Punk band of the ages. *The Complete Demos* collects 16 unreleased-until-now Adolescent tracks, including four frenzied blasts of sneering aggression recorded on a cassette deck in vocalist Tony Reflex's mom's garage in March 1980 (the band's earliest recording!). The remaining cuts were recorded in May 1980, July 1980, July 1981 (a venomously spat take on "Richard Hung Himself"), and April 1986. Though the sound quality is *obviously* muffled and muddy in spots, *The Complete Demos* is an absolute must-have treasure to round out any Punk collection worth its weight in black leather and phlegm. Be it not for bands like the Adolescents, Punk would have died an ugly, violent death a long time ago. (CD)**-Moser**

Air Conditioning "Weakness" *(Level Plane, POB 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906).* This is where I kind of draw the line. The album is heavy as sin, but I also think it's pretty unlistenable. It's like Dissecting Table meets Discordance Axis. For the most part it's just noise that is laid over a drumbeat. There is a ton of feedback, screeching loops and some barely acknowledgeable vocals. I have long appreciated the art of ambient noise; to create structure from raw sound is fascinating to me. But I also long ago stopped listening to it because after about five minutes I totally lose interest, just as I do trying to listen to a radio station that's not fully tuned in. (CD)**-Myk**

Alkaline Trio "Crimson" *(Vagrant, 2118 Wilshire Blvd, PMB 361, Santa Monica, CA 90403).* With *Crimson,* the Alkaline Trio proves to me why they're the best band playing Punk Rock. Lyrics, melody hooks—this album is stellar. "Time to Waste" is already on its way to becoming a hit single, and rightfully so—mixing striking piano into the tune showcases a band not afraid to expand their musical horizons without straying from the sound that is distinctively theirs. "Burn" is the most adventurous song on the disc, with its complex backing bass line over a Brit Rock-styled beat. The best song on the disc, and one of the best of their career, follows: "Mercy Me" is brilliant on every level, and even has guitarist Matt Skiba singing the verses and bassist Dan Andriano singing the choruses. Drummer Derek Grant's input on the music comes up on songs like "Prevent This Tragedy" and "Sadie;" each includes keyboard backing that breathes even more life and expression into the songs. I really have something good to say about every song on this CD. Alkaline Trio is a band that deserves to get bigger and bigger each release—their fanbase grows because of word of mouth and the sheer quality of the music, not thanks to some over-the-top marketing plan. Consistent bands like this don't come along too frequently; appreciate them while they're around. (CD)**-KevTV**

All Shall Perish "Hate-Malice-Revenge" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* If I had to put money down, I would have said these guys were from Poland. They have Vader and Behemoth written all over them, right down to the guitar sound. But, this band is from California and this is their debut album, and **man**, is it powerful! This is pure unadulterated Death Metal that combines a little bit of melody to make the progressions interesting. Fans of bands like Dying Fetus and Decapitated should step up and hear the power that is All Shall Perish. (CD)**-Myk**

Aluminum Knot Eye "Trunk Lunker" (*Dead Beat, POB 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078).* Wow! This is the trashiest Trash Rock band I've heard in a long time. With a production quality that rivals the Cheater Slicks and Halo of Flies, a guitarist who hits the right notes sometimes and a manic preacher-style vocalist a la Mike Hard from the God Bullies, AKE (as they're known) make the perfect soundtrack for drinking, barn burning, drinking, cow-tipping and drinking. They hail from Wisconsin, the home of cannibal serial killer Ed Gein, the Tar Babies, Die Kreuzen and my favorite super-underground heroes, the Two Felipes. This album is for people who like sloppy, deranged Drunk n' Roll. Glug glug. (LP)**-chuck.foster**

Animal Hospital *(Mister, 199 South St. #5, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130).* This is a one man band, so I'm not sure how he plays this live. Some of the (standard) multi-instrument stuff is really awesome in a Pinback meets Mogwai sort of way. I could do without the ambient noise stuff. (CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

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Apothecary Hymns "Trowel and Era" *(Locust Music, POB 220426, Chicago, IL 60622)*. Apothecary Hymns is a multi-talented, multi-instrumental musical genius whose given name is actually Alex Stimmel. He wrote, performed, recorded, and produced this sweetly swaying rush of aural lushness in a fit of pure creative radiance, and it's an amazing accomplishment on its very own merits. Sounding like a trippy tugboat troubadour who guzzles liquid LSD by the gallon, Alex guides the listener into a dazzling, vibrantly colorful journey of epic audio proportions. It's all-at-once dreamy, childlike, jubilant, and uplifting like a beatific, melody-enriched fairytale written and sung by Syd Barrett in medieval times. I shall now drink a tankard of mead and savor the succulent sounds of *Trowel and Era* for another lifetime or two. (CD)-**Moser**

Axel Rudi Pell "The Ballads 3" *(SPV USA, 48 Broad St. #287, Red Bank, NJ 07701)*. See title. Guitar dude compiles ballads, wishes the calendar said 1987. (CD)-**KevTV**

Balboa "Manifeste Cannibale" *(Forge Again, POB 146837, Chicago, IL 60614)*. Balboa strikes me as a little odd upon first listen. The vocals sound like they are right out of a Nordic Black Metal band, as does the recording quality. There are also those wintery, metallic, tinny-sounding guitar riffs that are predominant in the Metal underground, but the song change-ups are far more plentiful. While one part may sound like Burzum, they'll morph into a melodic interlude from a prototypical Metalcore band. What sets this band apart is the bass riffs and the drumming. The drummer has an almost Jazz tone to his playing; lots of funk and off time beats clearly stick out from the rest of the track to make it the dominant instrument on the recording. The bass playing is almost reversed with the guitar, playing highly impressive parts while the blaze of the power chords turn the guitar into a more stable instrument. While most Metal core bands are sounding like old Thrash bands these days, Balboa explores a far filthier background, almost in the vein of an Amebix type of band. (CD)-**Myk**

Bane "The Note" *(Equal Vision, POB 14, Hudson, NY 12534)*. Bane is the biggest all in all Hardcore band out there. They play Hardcore the way it sounded when I was a kid. All of their albums sound that way and *The Note* is no different; the band has really given credence to "staying true." The band has managed to entirely avoid the metallic sound that has encompassed almost every band in the scene today. They are even less metallic than Most Precious Blood, another band I hold to the Hardcore standard. With four releases, Bane is also very entrenched in the scene. Traditional Hardcore bands rarely made it past two albums, and if they did, the latter albums usually sucked it hard; Bane is as good as ever. If you loved bands like Chain of Strength, Insted, Inside Out, and Up Front, then this is the band for you. If those bands are a little too old school for you, but you like your bands without so much chunk in the songs, then that's here too. (CD)-**Myk**

Bantam "Suicide Tourist" *(Heavy Nose, www.bantamnyc.com)*. Fronted by Gina Volpe of The Lunachicks, Bantam is a New York City-based trio that ought to appeal to regular show-goers at The Continental. It's not what I would normally listen to, but it's attitude-driven Hard Rock with riffs. I'd imagine that Courtney Love wishes that this is the solo album she had made, or at least that Bantam was the band she fronted for it. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

BBQ "Tie Your Noose" *(Bomp!, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. BBQ is actually a one-man band in the form of Mark Sultan, who simultaneously sings, plays the guitar, shakes a tambourine (around his neck of all places!), and kicks unholy heck out of an improvised snare/bass drum kit. The music itself is a gritty, echo-laden witch's brew of psycho-crazed R&B and swamp n' hamhocks Garage Rock as might be performed by a homeless deep-fry cook on a street corner in the French Quarter of New Orleans. Vocally, Mark is obviously influenced by Sam Cooke (an uncanny resemblance in both style and delivery) and The Isley Brothers. The overall musical structure gives nods aplenty to Bo Diddley, Eddie Cochran, Bob Dylan, The Seeds, Sun Records, Buddy Holly, The Bobby Fuller Four, Ritchie Valens, and The Spencer Davis Group. Yep, a rockin' good time all the way around! I haven't touched my guitar in well over a year, but *Tie Your Noose* has stirred an uncontrollable desire within me to pull the ol' Epiphone out of its case, plug it into my long-suffering amp, and rock like a BBQ into the wee hours of the night. (CD)-**Moser**

BBQ "Tie Your Noose" *(Bomp!, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. BBQ is a one man band comprised of Mark Sultan on vocals, guitar and drum-stomp. All the tracks on this CD were recorded without overdubs in Montreal. The songs are pretty much derivations of Rock n' Roll circa 1965, i.e., revved-up Chuck Berry riffs, Kinks chording, Beatles-style progressions and other *Nuggets*-isms. He even covers the Rolling Stones. Okay. My only real complaint is that every single song has the same exact drumbeat, which gets annoying after a while and detracts from the songs. I understand the complexities of playing multiple instruments at the same time, but here's one case where the music would benefit from a lack of drums, at least in most of the songs. Just a suggestion. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Bedouin Soundclash "Sounding A Mosaic" *(SideOneDummy, 6201 Sunset Blvd, Suite 211, Hollywood, CA 90028)*. I was a little confused by this band. They took their name from an album that was released on ROIR in 1996, and I thought it was the same group. It isn't, but that doesn't really mean anything. This is a modern, updated version of the traditional Roots Reggae played by bands like Toots and then popularized by bands like the English Beat and The Specials. The album was produced by Darryl of the Bad Brains and really hits the mark on what I think Sublime was trying to do before they got sucked too far into the pop end of their songs. The band has managed to put together 13 high-quality tracks and have also included two remixes . If you're sitting around listening to some of those horrible Ska revival bands (aka Ska Punk), put them away and give this a spin. They may not sound like the Bosstones or Less Than Jake, but this is much better Reggae in general. (CD)-**Myk**

Ben Folds "Songs For Silverman"*(Epic, 550 Madison, Ave, New York, NY 10022)* . 2001's *Rockin' the Suburbs* is one of my favorite discs of the past few years, and really propelled me backwards into Ben's career with Ben Folds Five. Many appreciate Folds' talent, but the mainstream media seems to almost ignore his impressive abilities. *Songs For Silverman* is sadly a bit mediocre; based on his previous efforts—both solo and with his band—this new collection falls a bit short. "Landed" and "Bastard" are good songs, but are just the standouts on this album, whereas songs on his last album like "Fred Jones Part 2," and "The Luckiest" are standouts from his whole career. This new CD isn't bad, but not great. (CD)-**KevTV**

Bilge Pump "Let Me Breathe" *(Gringo, www.gringorecords.com)*. Leeds' Bilge Pump play an eclectic mix of Post-Punk and Art Rock Jazz. Think Gang of Four meets *Tweez*-era Slint, though not as talented as the former nor as monumental as the latter. But, *Let Me Breathe* delves into a style that seems to be all but abandoned, and takes me back to the earlier '90s when Touch and Go was still putting out records regularly. (CD)-**McClernon**

Bleed For Me "Composition" *(Sin Klub, POB 2507, Toledo, OH 43606)*. Bleed For Me is probably the best album that Sin Klub has ever released. It features ex-members of Every Time I Die, Slugfest, and Herod and is probably heavier than anything any of those bands have recorded. The band has incorporated all kind of things into their songs: keyboards, bongos, samples and diverse vocals all make appearances in these tracks. Musically, the band most resembles Slugfest and their Northern New York style of Hardcore. If you're a fan of any of the Syracuse bands like Another Victim, Bleed For Me is totally your scene. (CD)-**Myk**

Bleed The Dream "Built By Blood" *(Warcon, 168 West Ridge Pike, Suite 226, Limerick, PA 19468)*. Here is the most amazing thing about this album: the bands drummer came down with cancer and had to stop playing. He fought for a year—just long enough to come back and record the album—but died before it came out. It's impressive to be that sick and still be able to play on an album like this. It's amazing to still have the drive to do it. I wish his family the best. His legacy is a mixture of A Static Lullabye, Glassjaw, and Thrice. There are a lot of melodic parts with clean vocals as well as several brutally hard parts that easily could come from one of the Trustkill Records bands. Bleed The Dream isn't on a major label, but if they were, they might rise to the level of some of their contemporaries. They'll need a grassroots campaign and an appearance at one of the big summer tours to get their name out there. (CD)-**Myk**

Bleed The Sky "Paradigm In Entropy" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250)*. I don't like this band; there are too many parts shoved into their songs, and too many influences. Every element that's popular in heavy music is used here: Death Metal growls, clean vocals (mediocre), Math Rock-style guitars, Metalcore break downs. It's like the album was written to grab the ear of every fan out there, instead of the band just writing songs that were good. There's too much off-time stuff stuck in as well. This isn't chaos, it's just messy and over-filled. (CD)-**Myk**

The Blondes, Inc. *(www.theblondesinc.com)*. If you're a fan of the mid-late '70's New York Bowery scene, than the Blondes are definitely for you. Think the best elements of the Velvet Underground, Elvis Costello and Television, mixed with a bit of a more modern Rock n' Roll sound, and you have the Blondes, Inc. Don't be too surprised by the Television reference either, as Television guitarist Richard Lloyd is the master behind the board on this record, as well as being a driving force in helping the band find their true sound, as evidenced on this self-titled album. Whether you're sick of the retro thing or not at this point really doesn't matter, because this record doesn't come off as nostalgia, just four individuals playing what comes naturally to them, no tributes necessary. (CD)-**McClernon**

Blood In Blood Out "Respect Our Loyalty" *(Spook City, POB 34891, Philadelphia, PA 19101)*. Fairly generic NYHC that's not from New York City, but the mean streets of Laporte, Indiana. This shit gets boring really quick, and that's coming from a longtime fan of NYHC. There's just nothing here that hasn't been done or said already, so what's the point? (CD)-**McClernon**

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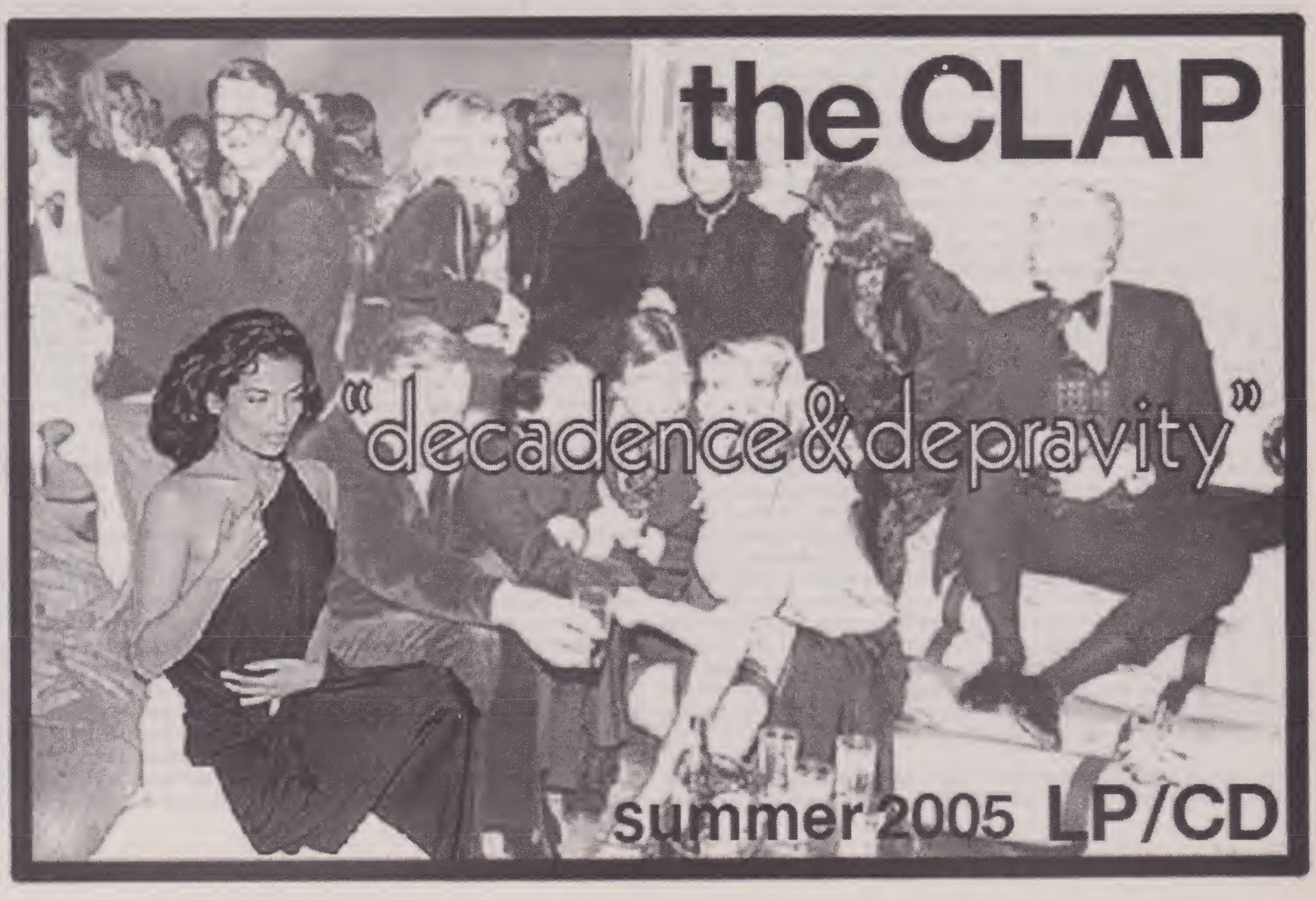


Blood Ritual "Black Grimoire" *(Moribund, 530-A 19th St., Port Townsend, WA 98368)*. If I'm not mistaken, Blood Ritual only has one member who plays everything. If that's the truth, he's an easy consideration for the spot of best one-man Metal band. None of the disciplines are obviously lacking: the guitar parts are innovative and claim that old Scandinavian sound while maintaining a far better recording quality. Tim's vocals are as vicious as any performer you find in the Death Metal scene, and the bass playing is proficient at its weakest point. There are a couple of points where the drums are not as dynamic as they could be, but in regards to the meat of the song, the speed and progressions are there. There isn't a lot in the line of straight out solos, but there are a few. There is a limited edition of this available that comes with a book, but I'm not sure what's in it. Fans of Deicide, Acheron, Nile and Divine Empire should check this out. (CD)-**Myk**

Bloodlined Calligraphy "They Want You Silent" *(Facedown, POB 477, Sun City, CA 92586)*. While not your typical Metalcore, this also falls a tad short of being original, though the guttural female vocals are a nice touch. While I enjoy this band's energy and enthusiasm—I'm sure they're a force to be reckoned with live—on record, Bloodlined Calligraphy come off as a female-fronted Hatebreed. (CD)-**McClernon**

The Bloody Tears "Downhanded" *(Licorice Tree, POB 92783, Austin, TX 78709)*. If I didn't have the press release telling me differently, I would've sworn up and down that *Downhanded* was recorded for the Stax label, circa 1966, by a bunch of greasy-haired swamp rats fueled on filter-less cigarettes, 180-proof homemade hooch, and lots of lowdown dirty desires. Yep, The Bloody Tears sound like they were born in a dilapidated, tin-roofed shotgun shack in the backwaters of the Mississippi Delta and raised in a smoky pool hall on the wrong side of the tracks in Memphis. They raucously invoke a musical form steeped deep in Southern-boogie Garage, hellfire-and-brimstone Gospel, and sleazy sex-sweaty R&B. With *Downhanded* loudly blaring throughout the Moser household, I can't help but wanna shimmy and shake between the sheets with my gal all night long. The Bloody Tears have grandly brought out the beast in me! (CD)-**Moser**

The Bombshells *(The Bombshells, POB 3361, Burbank, CA 91508-3361)*. The Bombshells play a decent rendition of SoCal Street Punk, complete with plenty of snot in the vocals, ala Johnny Rotten or Johnny from the Stitches. All in all, the 13 songs here demonstrate some competent songwriting abilities, but with the amount of bands still playing this style, I can see the Bombshells getting lost in the shuffle if they don't show a little more ingenuity in the future. (CD)-**McClernon**

Broken Bones "Time For Anger, Not Justice" *(Dr. Strange, POB 1058, Alta Loma, CA 91701)*. UK Hardcore stalwarts Broken Bones are back with a violently rampaging vengeance, and *Time For Anger, Not Justice* is being billed as "their best release since the 1982 *Dem Bones* full-length." Truth be told, I'd be a blithering deaf-dog idiot to disagree! This particular recording retains massive volumes of the classic Broken Bones sound, yet with an angrier, meaner, more modern edge. The band mercilessly roars forth and mangles everything in their path like a marauding gang of nuclear holocaust survivors who mutate into giant flesh-eating gutter rats come nightfall. The vocalist grunts and bellows as if he's an evil, glowering cyborg prowling for fresh-faced virgins to disembowel, and the instrumentation is frantic, menacing, and full of Armageddon-like doom. Indeed, *Time For Anger, Not Justice* is a sonic atom bomb explosion, and the resulting fallout is absolutely deafening. You can't run and you can't hide from the sheer apocalyptic Punk intensity of this one, folks! (CD)-**Moser**

Broken Bones "Time For Anger, Not Justice" (*Dr. Strange, POB Alta Loma, CA 91701)*. Eh, yet another English Hardcore band that borrows way too much from wanky Metal. Yawn. The riffs on this album have been rehashed to death, as have the generic screaming PC/anti-government lyrics that serve no purpose except to preach to the converted. I know war is bad and politicians are liars. So what? Tell me something I don't know. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Bruce Dickinson "Tyranny of Souls" *(Sanctuary, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036)*. I eagerly awaited the release of this album. *The Chemical Wedding* was probably the best "Iron Maiden" album since *Powerslave*. It was a monster release that proved that Maiden needed Bruce far more that he needed them. Now, after two Maiden outings, Bruce has re-teamed with Roy-Z to pen *Tyranny of Souls*. The album contains 10 tracks that are very similar in tone to *Accident of Birth*, a strong album in its own right. But to be honest, this just didn't live up to my expectations. This is my proverbial *Reign In Blood* syndrome. While *South of Heaven* was a strong album that I love to this day, it wasn't *Reign In Blood*. I love this, but it isn't *The Chemical Wedding*. The heavy isn't here— **that** album just had a tone and feel that was downright nasty. This album is blazing Metal, Bruce style, but it doesn't have that special quality of *Wedding* had. I would still urge people to pick this up, as it's a very good listen, but it's just a step down from his best. (CD)-**Myk**

Bucket Full of Teeth "IV" *(Level Plane, POB 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906)*. Featuring ex-members of Orchid and current members of Transistor Transistor, Bucket Full of Teeth was a short-lived project that played a handful of shows, recorded three 7" inches and one proper full-length, titled *IV*, which is what we have here. In typical Power Violence fashion, Bucket Full of Teeth bust out 12 songs (if you can call them that) in 16 minutes, so you can guarantee that there's no unnecessary musical noodling going on here. While this is not one of my favorite releases from Level Plane, I **do** appreciate the band's attempt at blending a number of styles, including Death Metal, Thrash and even Stoner Rock, at most times successfully. (CD)-**McClernon**

Burn The Priest *(Epic, 550 Madison, Ave., New York, NY 10022)*. So, this is a re-issue. If your head has been completely up your arse for the last five years or so, this is the debut recording by the band that's now known as Lamb Of God. This has been re-mastered and given extended artwork. Aside from the fact that this is just at the top of the Heavy fucking Metal meter, the remix is just unbelievable. This is a recording that will just incite violence all around it. No Metalcore, no Punk Rock, no Emo, or any other sub-style has the power that only exudes from a **real** Heavy Metal album. The early Thrash scene is revived instantly to its one time dominance beginning with this recording. Count your blessings that this is now widely available for everyone; it helped lay the groundwork for the current American Metal scene. (CD)-**Myk**

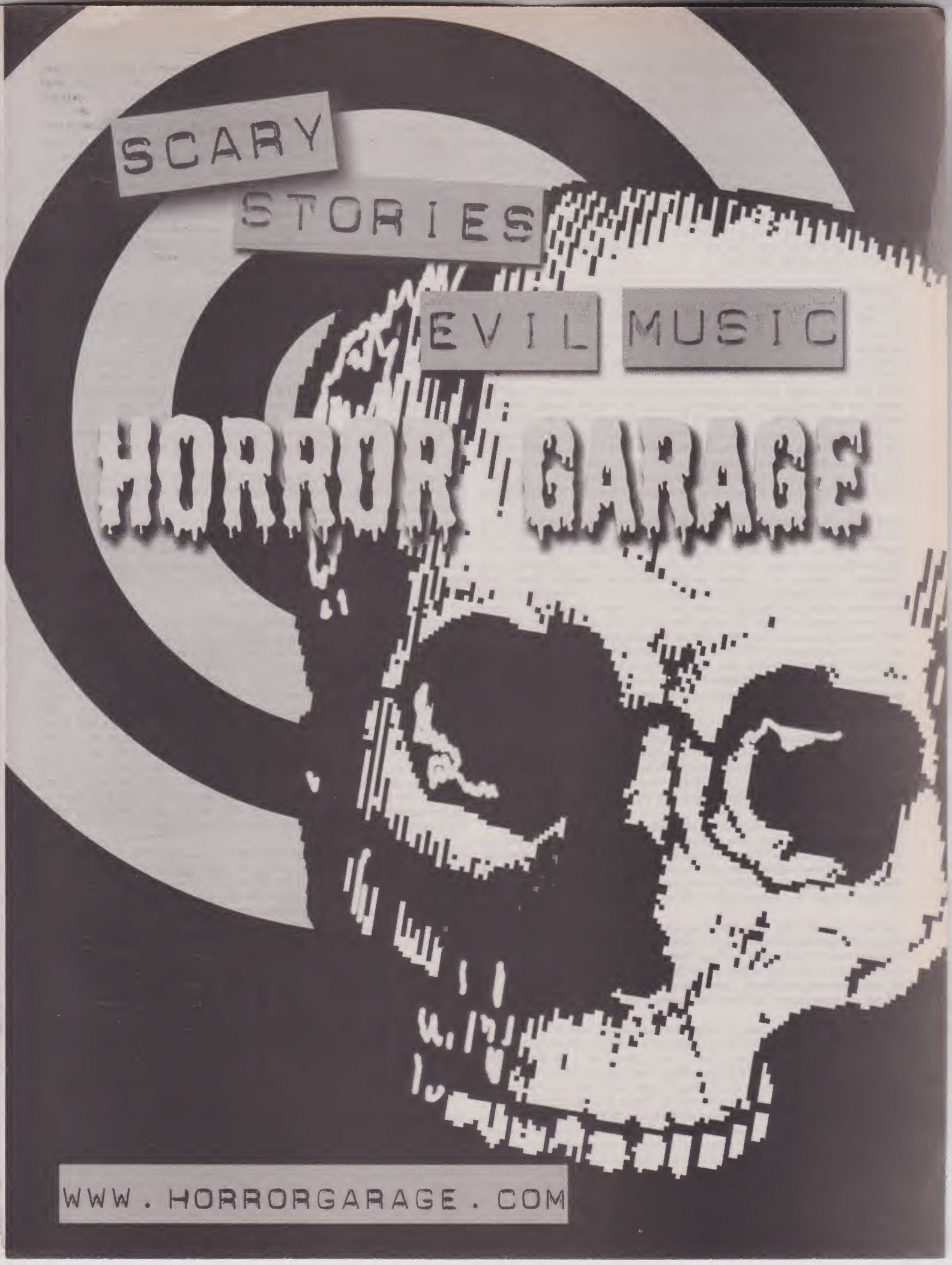
Buzz*oven "Welcome to Violence" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)*. "Welcome to violence" is right! Everything about this release just makes you grimace in pain. Think a combination of equal parts early and present Melvins material, except angrier. While maybe not my usual cup of tea, Buzzoven succeed in composing songs that should get both metalheads and Hardcore kids moshing it up in no time. *Welcome to Violence* compiles a number of the band's earliest recordings, and for those of you not interested in searching them out in their original formats or want them all in one convenient package, you can't go wrong with this release. Besides, you get a killer sample from *Full Metal Jacket*, which makes the purchase of this disc almost necessary on its own. (CD)-**McClernon**

By Night "Burn the Flags" *(LifeForce, POB 680, Conshohocken, PA 19428)*. I absolutely hate the guitar sound on this recording. Even with the distortion and the crunched chords, the guitar sounds twangy, a major sticking point to overcome while listening to By Night. To be honest, I didn't get over it. I wasn't floored by the release anyway. The album is okay. By Night is one of those bands that you don't hate while listening to them, but you'd probably never put 'em on by choice. The vocals are similar to Tom from Most Precious Blood, and the music sort of reminds me of an attempt to emulate Burnt By The Sun. At times the album has too much going on—like the last Scarlet album did —and the parts don't really work well together. I'd say the band put some real effort into this, but I have to also say that it's an album you can probably pass on for your collection. (CD)-**Myk**

The Cardinal Effect "Red Light Carousel" *(Tribunal, POB 49322, Greensboro, NC 27419)*. The first 30 seconds of this CD were pretty cool—an ambient keyboard buildup. Then it turned into Screamo-Metal and I frowned. To make matters worse, there isn't a single original thought on this entire CD. Ugh. Oh well, just another drop in my Emo water torture. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Carpathian Forest "Skiend Hans Lik" *(Seasons of Mist, POB 29364, Philadelphia, PA 19125)*. I don't have a ton of information on this, which isn't exactly a surprise coming from a band like Carpathian Forest. I do know it has the re-issue of the bands demo, "Bloodlust and Perversion" which was originally released as a cassette. The other four tracks on this are rare alternate versions of released songs with the exception of the track "Humiliation Chant" which was unreleased. What's to say about Carpathian Forest. They still maintain that old Black Metal recording style that sounds like they recorded in a tin can and they sound like Hellhammer and early Celtic Frost. Like Darkthrone, they found a style and sound that they and their fans like and they stick to it. I for one am never upset when a new Carpathian Forest release comes, But this one has a little for all their fans, new and old, and having the demo on CD for the first time is the gem of this release. The foil printed front cover is kind of cool as well, although bordering on commercial for these guys. (CD)-**Myk**

The Casualties "En La Linea Del Frente" *(SideOneDummy, POB 2350, Los Angeles, CA 90078)*. After listening to the Spanish version of *On the Front Lines*, the latest release by New York Hardcore Punk veterans the Casualties, I have to ask: "Are we sure Jorge has been singing in English all along?" I still can't make out a fucking word. As far as the music goes, the Casualties don't stray too far from the formula they've perfected for over a decade. The band has two speeds: fast and ludicrously fast, and neither tempo has gotten old for myself or fans. While many people criticize the band for being a caricature of what Punk Rock is supposed to be, the band has never mellowed or sold out, as many of the bands playing a similar style before and after them have. If anything, The Casualties have gotten even harder and tighter, and with Bill Stevenson at the helm for this record, this is unquestionably the best-sounding Casualties record to date, with a huge sound that seems to complements the songs. *En La Linea Del Frente* is for record collectors, huge fans of the band, and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those who consider Spanish their first language, but for the rest of you, I'd suggest sticking with *On the Front Lines* and their back catalog. Oh, and guys, for the love of God, lose those soccer jerseys...bunch of hooligans. (CD)-**McClernon**

Cataract "With Triumph Comes Loss" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. #302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. Right from the first notes you're pummeled by the brutality of the recording. Imagine if Integrity's *Those Who Fear Tomorrow* had The Haunted's production, and you can imagine the instant smack in the face. The sheer power of the bottoming guitar sounds is crushing as on few recordings; they remind me of the tuned-down sound from Bruce Dickinson's *Chemical Wedding*. Cataract hails back to the early Thrash days with an all out attack of speed and ripping vocals that sort of remind me of Nuclear Assault, but are far more venomous. Here is a Swiss band that has avoided the pitfalls and play what they want with a refurbished sensibility that hits hard on many levels. (CD)-**Myk**

The Charming Snakes "Ammunition" *(www.dirtnaprecs.com)*. The world is no doubt a crazy, careening out-of-control orbital mess. I realize this more and more when I hear such an outrageously inspiring band as The Charming Snakes and then wonder for the life of me why they aren't the most popular musical concept to ever hit the airwaves. Though I'm sure it would have something to do with the fact that The Charming Snakes are just too damn delightfully discordant, jittery, and fractured for the mainstream Joe Blow masses to easily swallow or readily digest. Fuck 'em! They know not what they're missing! *Ammunition* is an angular, blistering Post-Punk cacophony with sharp, jagged edges that slice into the flesh like molten shards of shrapnel blasting from the frontlines of a futuristic robot-scattered war zone. The distorted snot-spittin' vocals, urgent radioactive guitars, booming thermo-kinetic bass, huge industrial-stomp drums, and assorted intergalactic electronic emissions lead me to believe that The Charming Snakes share the very same bloodline with PIL and Wire shattered like stress-resistant sheets of glass in a nuclear wind. If this is any inkling of where the future of music is headed, I want to live to be 100! (CD)-**Moser**

Civet "Massacre" *(Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. According to the dictionary, a civet is "a catlike mammal, native to Africa and Asia, with anal scent glands that secret a fluid possessing a musky odor" (I'm assuredly not making the aforementioned up, folks!). Hmmm, the Civet that's currently scratching and screaming its way out of my stereo speakers disruptively secretes a ferociously growling outburst of savage Punk Rock sounds unlike any other. These four brutally temperamental gals look like they're fresh out of high school via a prom night spent in a juvenile detention center for participating in a marathon murderous rampage. With a menacing vixen vocalist who screeches like an enraged, Ritalin-addled lioness and a frenetically pounding musical accompaniment that could only be produced in a futuristic ironworks factory, the euphoric high-energy noise of Civet is a groundbreaking nerve-twitching assault of louder-than-life auditory fieriness. Civet serves it up wild and well, so I'm going back for seconds, thirds, fourths, and more, hot damn! (CD)-**Moser**

Civet "Massacre"*(Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. All-female, tough-looking-yet-attractive Punk quartet with scratchy (and generally grating) lead vocals. Points are absolutely due for the attitude and energy that dominate *Massacre*, which are generally hard to display on a studio record. But the predictable chord progressions and lack of dynamics can take their toll. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Codeseven "Dancing Echoes/Dead Sounds" *(Equal Vision, POB 14, Hudson, NY 12534)*. Alright. I've had it with these guys. Every album sounds different, and you know what they sound like? They sound like whatever is the hot trend of that minute. The first album was building Metalcore, then they were melodic Hardcore and now they sound like fucking Coheed. They're ridiculous. Can they play? Yes. Do they write competent songs? Yes. Are they total tools? Yes. I hate trend jumpers. (CD)-**Myk**

Collapsar *(Escape Artist, POB 472, Downingtown, PA 19335)*. Tech-Metal lunacy. Surging hessian licks and bizarre tempo shifts define these dissonant instrumentals. Shards of Grind, Thrash, Noise and Post-Rock experimentation coalesce on this six song offering, creating discord that is intermittently fascinating and occasionally dull. While the emphasis on technical noodling supercedes any overt ripping hinted at, the layers of complex clamor fuse to form fascinating soundscapes. (CD)-**Ramek**

Comeback Kid "Wake the Dead" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. Well, you can't ask for more in production than getting Bill Stephenson. The thing is, even though he did this record, it doesn't sound like a "Bill Stephenson" band—he has a way of doing that sometimes. Comeback Kid have a surprisingly early '90's Straight Edge sound on this album. I automatically thought of bands from New Age and Conversion Records the minute I heard this—Mouthpiece, Turning Point and Outspoken were just a couple of bands that came to mind while listening to this. The odd thing is, this is yet another Canadian band that Victory has scooped up; it's like they're growing them there now. Comeback Kid is a little more melodic than the bands that I mentioned, but that only becomes evident through multiple listenings. It's good to hear a band that will show up on stage with shorts, long sleeve Schism shirts, and high tops again. Unfortunately, I missed the tour, but I'm sure there was a lot of finger-pointing and flying roundhouse kicks swarming the joint. (CD)-**Myk**

The Crimson Curse "Blood Thirsty Lust EP" *(Coalition, Newtonstr. 212, 2562 KW Den Haag, Netherlands)*. Apparently, The Crimson Curse was a side project of one of the members of The Locust. This CD is one song that has been remixed five times by the likes of Cattle Decapitation, Bastard Noise, Spacewurm, Monotonous and Crimson Curse themselves. It's crap. I'm not sure what the original song sounds like, but from the vocals I can discern, they sound really whiney. Not to mention, I don't want to listen to **any** song five times in a row and definitely not like this. I just don't see the allure in deconstructing tracks. At best, the Bastard Noise track is just that: noise. The Cattle Decapitation track doesn't seem all that interesting and by that point I was bored. This is suggested for DJs, but I don't know anyone who would play this for any reason. (CD)-**Myk**

Crionics "Armageddon's Evolution" *(Candlelight US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462)*. Behold, yet again, another band from Poland that is so massive in stature that few musical acts in this world come close. Unlike their countrymen Behemoth and Vader, Crionics plays more Black Metal than Death Metal. They remind me a lot of bands on Nocturnal Arts. Bands like Limbonic Art, Odium and of course, Emperor. It doesn't hurt that the band does a cover of Emperor's "The Loss and Curse of Reverence" either. Crionics' use of keyboards have returned to the time when they set an atmospheric tone, as opposed to overpowering the music with flowery elements. This is far more brutal than the likes of Cradle or Dimmu, but the recordings are better than your typical Black Metal release. Fans who are lamenting the existence of Peccatum can get this for a quick pick me up. (CD)-**Myk**

The Dan Band "Live!" *(SideOneDummy, 6201 Sunset Blvd, Suite 211, Hollywood, CA 90028)*. **THIS IS A TOTAL RIP OFF AND UTTER CRAP!** Me First and the Gimme Gimmes released *Are A Drag* in 1999 and now people are hailing **this** schmuck as revolutionary? Wow! I'm floored by a band of men doing covers of women's songs; it's the same mentality that makes bands like The Strokes popular when the groups they ripped off stay relatively unknown. Not to mention, compared to *Are A Drag*, this is crap. The songs are played straight— which just makes them sound dumb with a guy singing—and the band isn't shattering any records for talent. This is completely infuriating. (CD)-**Myk**

Dan Melchior "Hello, I'm Dan Melchior, aka Singer-Songranter" *(Shake It, 4156 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45223)*. Usually when someone puts out an album of songs recorded entirely by themselves (and maybe a spouse or two), the result is either self-indulgent or an incomplete set of demos that would have worked better with a full band. Yet somehow this collection of lo-fi recordings by Herr Melchior and his wife, Letha, is surprisingly complete. The strength is in the song styles, which dance all over the place in eclectic bliss. In "Americana Strip Mall Rag," Dan establishes himself as a "songranter," rapidly machine-gunning lyrics over guitar distortion and a kick-snare drumbeat. "She Knows Me Well" is a poppy little peon to Letha that comes across like Ray and Dave Davies too drunk at the piano. Then there's "Demon From the Start," which is full-on head-trip Psychedelia. Mr. Melchior has collaborated with the likes of Billy Childish and Holly Golightly, as well as fronting his own band, The Broke Revue. His first "go-it-alone" is a fine piece of Contemporary/Retro Lo-Fi that will hold its own amid the sea of hipster drabness. Beck wishes he could have been this good. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Day at the Fair "The Rocking Chair Years" *(Rushmore, POB 55234, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413)*. Don't let the label name fool you... this is basically a subsidiary of Drive-Thru, which will release records by bands that aren't household names just yet. So what does Day at the Fair sound like? Like they should be on Drive-Thru Records. Really lame pop tunes that are over-produced and slicker than Pat Riley's coif. If ever a band was geared for the MTV2 crowd, Day at the Fair would be that band. If you have even a modicum of interest in Punk Rock, avoid. (CD)-**McClernon**

Death Before Dishonor "Friends Family Forever" *(Bridge Nine, POB 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052)*. Alternating between fast-paced Hardcore and surlier predilections, this full-length from Death Before Dishonor does a fair job bridging disparate styles across the Hardcore spectrum. The band's melody-laced structure does much to bolster an otherwise streamlined "tough" sound on this record. While the hackneyed gravel charred vocals grate after a time, the band's riff battery thankfully succumbs to minimal Metal mosh, maintaining a rapid-fire drive. Dogmatic lyrics spanning loss, loneliness, and struggle are predictably pervasive. A solid enough effort. (CD)-**Ramek**

Death By Stereo "Death For Life" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. I've always considered Death By Stereo's previous albums as mostly uneven affairs, with a few gems surrounded with some songs that were downright annoying, and *Death For Life* is no different. While I find the songwriting and overall

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musicianship infinitely better than on 2003's *In the Valley of Death*, the band sinks into a similar rut as they have in the past: creating a handful of very-well crafted Hardcore/Metal tunes along the lines of Life of Agony (exemplified heavily in Efram's vocals), coupled with tunes that in comparison should never have made the cut. I'm waiting for the day that Death By Stereo creates their ultimate masterpiece, because I believe the band has it in them, they just haven't achieved it yet. (CD)-**McClernon**

Demon City Wreckers "Inner Demons" *(Hairball 8, POB 681674, San Antonio, TX 78268)*. Two words immediately leap into my fermented, brew-ravaged mind after giving *Inner Demons* a couple of whirls: KICK ASS! The Demon City Wreckers rowdily unleash a decadently devilish firestorm of frightful, hell-blazin' Punkabilly mayhem and madness. It's a ghoulish, hootin'-and-hollerin' display of outrageous auditory hedonism that could only be conjured in the deepest pits of Hades and then venomously spewed forth from the fiery fangs of Satan himself. Sounding like a mutant crossbred alien-monster rampage consisting of Elvis, The Misfits, TSOL, Hasil Adkins, early Suicidal Tendencies, and Damnation, the Demon City Wreckers switchblade-slash their way through such sonically disturbing treats as "Leading By Intimidation," "Left For Dead," "Bury Me Screaming," "Zombie Girl," "Alone In the Dark," and five more unholy blasts of sheer musical terror. Rock n' Roll has never sounded so evil, vile, and primal. Scary? Yes! And I'm breathlessly impressed down to the shivering of my bones! (CD)-**Moser**

Demons & Wizards "Touched By the Crimson King" *(SPV USA, 48 Broad St, #287, Red Bank, NY 07701)*. Alright, I admit it, I really liked the debut from Demons & Wizards. I like Iced Earth and Blind Guardian, but I don't love either. I think they are at the top of the Power Metal scene, but all of those bands get tiresome to me. Demons & Wizards seemed a little different, avoiding all of the ridiculous stereotypical elements that made that style cheesy and goofy. Unfortunately, lightning does not strike twice. With *...Crimson King* they've stepped away from the heavier aspects of their debut and used more keyboards, galloping song parts and horrible choruses—and I mean **choruses**, with tons of singers, like a choir. This album has descended into the realm of the bands on AFM and the other Italian Power bands that are so hokey. I wanted to like this, but it's just so silly and stereotypical; it's the kind of album you think of when someone pokes fun of Metal by making a claw with their hand while doing some bad falsetto voice. Those comical moments come from somewhere, and this is one of those places. (CD)-**Myk**

Dropkick Murphys "The Warrior's Code" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. The Boston boys are back and it's like they never went away. The new album contains all of the melodic Irish Punk Rock you expect from the Dropkick Murphys. This album is a little more light hearted sounding than the last outing, but their cutting wit has not been lost. This contains the track "Tessie," the band's ode to the Boston Red Sox and their World Series win. The album sets in at 14 tracks and there isn't a one you won't find yourself singing along to. While this may not be the blazing Street Punk that the band has become the standard for, they're setting new standards for Rock n' Roll. Dropkick Murphys have defined a style and a generation of Punk with their Rock This album is no exception, and as many bands as you heard ripping them off before, this will put the Dropkicks right in the limelight. It's only a matter of time before we see the DKM/ Flogging Molly Guinness tour at Madison Square Garden. Oh, and "Wicked Sensitive Crew" is maybe the funniest Emo-bashing song I've ever heard. (CD)-**Myk**

Eckankore "No Symbols Where None Intended" *(Eckankore, Bands411.com/eckankore)*. Since 1996, Eckankore has assaulted LA audiences with eardrum crushing noise. Nine years later, they still have the ability to make ears bleed, but they've honed their craft beyond mere knob twiddling to weave an intensely emotional soundscape of extreme uneasiness. To be honest, I'm quite frightened as I sit here listening to this CD—I keep looking over my shoulder. *No Symbols Where None Intended* could provide the audio for your favorite scenes of violence in *Last House On the Left* or the abstract uncomfortable surrealism of *THX-1138*. Either way, the vision is disturbing and bleak, and that's just how I like it. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

El Toro "May and Marielle" *(Undecided, 1213 North D St., Lake Worth, FL 33460)*. Maybe it's the Nyquil kicking in, but I'm digging this record a little more than I'd like to admit to. This is very poppy Pop/Rock, recorded slicker than a friggin' pompadour, but the songs are undeniably catchy and upbeat, and, in my current state, just what the doctor ordered. While I may wake up tomorrow regretting the words I've just written, there's no question that El Toro can write tunes filled with hooks about topics we can all relate to: relationships and their ups and downs. Right now, that's good enough for me. (CD)-**McClernon**

Electric Eel Shock "Go USA!" *(Gearhead, POB 421219, San Francisco, CA 94142)*. Hailing from the Land of the Rising Rock n' Roll, Electric Eel Shock is a trio of crazed musical kamikazes who twitch and tweak in a raging frenzy of all-out amplified monsoon thunder with loads of grungy overtones. It's a full-throttle megaton Japanoise explosion, heavy on volcanic Arena Rock riffs, some powerfully blistering leads, and enough booming rhythmic voltage (via the bass and drums) to keep Tokyo brightly lit in a radiant electrical glaze for the next century or two. And I cannot fail to mention the theatrical, hyperactive vocalist who screeches and growls intermittently in both English and Japanese like a tormented, meth-wrecked hellion. If bands like MC5, Motorhead, Nirvana, and Zeke get your motor revvin', then Electric Eel Shock is more'n guaranteed to drive you into unstoppable fits of high-octane excitement. (CD)-**Moser**

Electric Eel Shock "Go USA!" *(Gearhead, POB 421219, San Francisco, CA 94142)*. Electric Eel Shock is starting to make quite a name for themselves on our shores. First making waves over here with their split 7" with the mighty Riverboat Gamblers, Electric Eel Shock's latest full-length is balls to the wall Rock n' Roll, played in the fine tradition of other Eastern acts such as Teengenerate and Fifi and the Mach III. Sure there's a bit of a language barrier, but the tunes rock so damn hard that you'll forget about the band's broken English in no time. The most appealing attribute of the band is how forceful they come across on record, which makes me think that their live show could be nothing short of explosive. "Go Japan!" (CD)-**McClernon**

Electric Frankenstein "Burn Bright, Burn Fast" *(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave. #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)*. Over the years, I heard a couple of people complain about the Electric Frankenstein releases on Victory Records. They said they were too heavy and lost the Punk Rock sound from the early *Time Is Now* era that attracted them in the first place. Apparently, my friends aren't the only people that weren't entirely happy with those albums, as the band has done a total 180, releasing an album that easily could have been from 1995 as opposed to the actual 2005 release. As usual, the band presents a set of covers at the end of the album that only the most ardent music fan would be familiar with. It his case it's tracks from Music Machine, Flo & Eddie and The Cars. After 13 years, this band is still kicking it, and despite having stints with people like Rik L Rik, I still have to say that Steve is my favorite EF vocalist; he has that dirty Rock n' Roll sound that shoots you back to the era of the New York Dolls and Iggy Pop. This is the best the band has been in years, and they still know how to kick it hard. (CD)-**Myk**

Entombed "Unreal Estate" *(Candlelight US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462)*. So this could be the strangest release of all time. A Death Metal band of legendary proportions playing live in an opera house to accompany a live performance by a ballet troop of more than 30 dancers—is that even possible? Yeah, well, it happened. These tracks are all Entombed originals, including "Night of the Vampire," "Left Hand Path," and "Returning to Madness." The songs have been slightly modified, but it's Entombed, and the recording contains an arena sound with acoustics like you've never heard on a live Death Metal album. The recording is immaculate and the songs take a different tone than the originals, especially when the tracks are bass-heavy. It sounds odd, but it works, right down to the guitar slides. The audience was given earplugs upon entering, and reports were that this was something to behold. I can't imagine my mother sitting through Entombed to watch a ballet, but apparently some people did and they enjoyed it. There is to be a DVD of the performance at some point, but for now, this is the best live Entombed recording to date, even if the circumstances are unbelievable. (CD)-**Myk**

The Epoxies "Stop the Future" *(Fat Wreck Chords, POB 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690)*. One of the best signings by Fat in years, The Epoxies come out strong on the follow-up to their brilliant debut album on Dirtnap. The Epoxies are the solution to all the hacks currently hailed in the mainstream music press as the "new New Wave." This band has them all beat, if only for the fact that they actually look and sound like they've been transplanted from the '80s and been raised on a steady diet of Gary Numan, Depeche Mode and Punk bands such as the Ramones and the Dickies. Don't be concerned about any sophomore slump here; *Stop the Future* is just as good, if not better, than their self-titled effort, and soon-to-be-classics such as "Radiation" and their ingenious cover of the Scorpions' "Robot Man" will prove that time and again. (CD)-**McClernon**

The Epoxies "Stop The Future" *(Fat Wreck Chords, POB 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119)*. For those who lament the inactivity of both Man or Astro Man? and Servotron as well as the lack of a new Devo recording over the years, The Epoxies may be the solution. The band combines the finest parts of '80's New Wave with some punk mentality and a vocalist who could easily replace Terry Bozio of Missing Persons. This is retro at it's finest; if you were awestruck by the latest work of a band like The Faint; then you absolutely must check this out. They even look the part on the front cover. (CD)-**Myk**

The Esoteric "With the Sureness of Sleepwalking" (*Prosthetic, 11664 National Blvd #413, Los Angeles, CA 90064)*. It may not be your everyday Screamo, but it still does absolutely nothing for me, except maybe annoy me a little bit. I'm talking about the new Esoteric CD, and by the way, their band name is false advertising in that there is not a shred of esoteric music on this entire album. All the songs kinda go "Chugga-chugga-stop-chugga-stop-chugga-scream-chugga-scream-chugga-stop." As far as I

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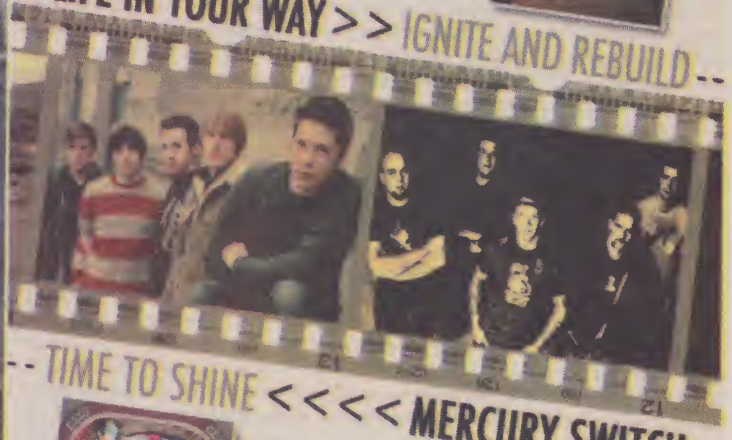

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can tell, the best part of the band is the drummer—excuse me, "percussionist"— who would be incredible if he didn't resort to the same beats in every song. And the singer's got one of those really irritating screams that sounds like a tortured mountain lion—a one-trick pony. Okay, what's next? (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Esoteric "With the Sureness of Sleepwalking" *(Prosthetic, 11664 National Blvd #413, Los Angeles, CA 90064)*. The Esoteric have done a good job of shaking off the prototypical sound of a midwestern Hardcore band, which is usually held to the standard set by Coalesce and later bands like Reggie and the Full Effect or The Casket Lottery. The band has not totally forgone that sound, with Coalesce influences all over the vocals, but they have branched out also. Bands like Neurosis come to mind, and Burnt By The Sun, Poison The Well and even Burn It Down make some audible appearances. The album is far from the chaos that many bands strive for these days, but contains a constricted power that is manipulated in the sonic attack. Fans of Math Rock bands like Dillinger and A Life Once Lost will definitely find this intriguing. (CD)-**Myk**

Evergreen Terrace "Sincerity Is An Easy Disguise In this Business" *(Eulogy, POB 24913, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307)*. In my mind, this is one of the best bands in the scene today. They work hard. They tour and they put out releases as often as possible. This is their first full-length of all new material in about three years, and once again the band delivers. In comparison to a band like As I Lay Dying, Evergreen Terrace isn't as heavy, and the clean vocals are much more melodic. Evergreen Terrace could easily be called a "Metal core" band, but they aren't. They're a Hardcore band that at times utilizes some metallic riffs. They are similar in sound to Walls of Jericho, but their song structures are closer to what you might hear from Sick Of It All. It's also good that this came out close to their new DVD which prominently features the track "Brave Reality," which is one of the most diverse songs on the album. Evergreen Terrace has never put out a bad release, and they aren't about to start now. I can't think of a more deserving band. (CD)-**Myk**

Fall Out Boy "From Under the Cork Tree" *(Island, 825 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10019)*. Once again, Fall Out Boy delivers an album that will excite the average 14 year old girl; it's got hooks in all the right places (to snag a NOFX line). They **do** have a sense of humor, as the opening track, "Our Lawyer Made Us Change the Name of This Song So We Wouldn't Get Sued," describes them to a T—being the trend of the week. Poppy songs and a proven formula make this band a "one to watch." They're big now; I think this album will make them bigger. If you like the Good Charlotte's and Blink 182s of the world, this is where you're headed. If you hate all things commercial and radio-friendly, well, this might drive you over the edge. (CD)-**Myk**

Feersum Enjin *(Silent Uproar, 5614 Split Oak Dr., Raleigh, NC 27609)*. This is pretty much a solo EP from Paul D'Amour, original bassist for Tool. These songs definitely sound like Tool—structure, guitar tone, vocal melodies, progressions—it's all there, but Tool's huge advantage is the mesmerizing drumming of Danny Carey and the beyond strong vocals of Maynard James Keenan. D'Amour's vocals are actually quite solid, but comparing him or anyone to Keenan is an uphill battle. Still, Tool fans should not be timid to check out this five song EP. D'Amour's musical lineage is accurately portrayed on these songs. (CD)-**KevTV**

Folsom "If You're a Viper" *(Spook City, POB 34891, Philadelphia, PA 19101)*. If most Hardcore from Las Vegas sounds like Folsom, then consider me a converted fan. I mean, I was already a fan of the Sin City itself, as it supports all my favorite vices, but was never privy to their Hardcore. Folsom plays a rough and tough combination of more old school Hardcore with a metallic edge, accompanied with an early '80's British Oi feel, particularly felt in a few of the sing-a-long choruses. Think later period Warzone as a reference. While you may not be immediately blown away by Folsom, you will quickly become a fan of this six-song EP. (CD)-**McClernon**

Gatsby's American Dream "Volcano" *(Fearless, 13772 Goldenwest St. #545, Westminster, CA 92683)*. Gatsby's American Dream has been one of those bands whose name I've been hearing about for ages, but never took the initiative to check them out. It seems lately that they've become the Emo band that it's okay to like, and after hearing this record, I just might have to agree with the crowd for once. Gatsby's American Dream reminds me of a cross between Alkaline Trio and more complex acts such as latter day Cave In or Classic Case. With no knowledge of the band's prior releases, I have nothing to compare *Volcano* to, but I can tell you that there are 13 songs here, and not once did my interest sway. What makes GAD stand out is their unique approach to songwriting and song structures, at times dismissing the idea of choruses altogether, which was a technique that Emo pioneers such as Sunny Day Real Estate perfected. While my favorite song on here, "Fable," may be the most mainstream and accessible, the band goes back to the idea of an album being greater than the sum of its parts. While there are no can't miss hits, there's also no filler, the key to making an album that will be listened to years down the line. (CD)-**McClernon**

Geography "L1fe 1n B1nary" *(Universal Warning, 865 Main St., Royersford, PA 19468)*. It's a real shame that this CD is only 27 minutes long. There is so much good going on here. From the vocals that remind me of early Replacements albums, to the explosive guitar riffs and the great recording, *Geography* has an honest sound that is rare in today's swarm of bands. As I listen to this I can't help but think of *Sorry Ma, Forgot to Take Out the Trash*. It has the Punk elements, but also has the elements that helped define the early "Alternative" scene. I've already listened to this like six times and it doesn't get old. It's an impressive offering that will ring with older fans as well as strike with the Screamo fans. It should just hit the spot with people that love heavy music. (CD)-**Myk**

The Gimmies "Phonic Souls" *(Dionysus, POB 1975, Burbank, CA 91507)*. On one hand, Japan's Gimmies have recorded a powerful slab of noisy Ruckus-Roll produced by Michael Davis of the MC5; on the other hand, a lot of it comes across as mere Detroit-Rock imitation. For example, they cover Radio Birdman's "New Race." Now, Deniz Tek grew up seeing the Stooges and the MC5, but he did his own thing with his own music—sure, the influences were there, but it sounded like Radio Birdman, not the MC5 Mach 2. For another example, they cover Randy Newman's "Have You Seen My Baby," only their version sounds strikingly similar to the version on the Flamin' Groovies' *Teenage Head*, making this a cover of a cover. Yuck! Unfortunately, the original songs aren't really strong enough to stand on their own, and they're not all that original anyway. The Gimmies would probably be great live, but that's as far as it goes. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Gitogito Hustler "Gitogito Galore" *(Gearhead, POB 421219, San Francisco, CA 94142)*. When it comes to Rock n' Roll, can the Japanese do wrong? From Teengenerate to the 5,6,7,8's, Japan just seems to be able to churn out high-quality bands like they're coming off a damn assembly line. Gitogito Hustler is no different, and speaking of the 5,6,7,8's, the band shares a similar sound with the house band from *Kill Bill Vol. 1*, though they exhibit a bit more of a Pop/Punk sound. Now because of the Pop/Punk leanings that Gitogito Hustler seem to have a soft spot for, the band tends to remind me a bit of Supersnazz, but with killer '50's/early '60's Pop backing vocals thrown in for good measure. This is a tasty little six-song EP that's just whetting the appetite of the rabid fanbase that's quickly building. (CD)-**McClernon**

GitoGito Hustler "Gito Gito Galore" *(Gearhead, POB 421219, San Francisco, CA 94142)*. Such speed, such energy, such wild and giddy passion! The GitoGito Hustler girls come shootin' out of Japan like a nuclear-powered comet on a one-way mission to spread laughter, fun, and loudness throughout the world. Theirs is the abundantly euphoric and radiantly seismic sound of Punk, New Wave, and zany Saturday morning cartoons. If the Ramones joyously morphed into The Go-Go's and huffed a towering silo full of helium, *Gito Gito Galore* would be the resulting rush of fever-pitched musical merriment. (CD)-**Moser**

Glory of This "Adoration" *(Indianola, 3072 Sheridan Rd, Valdosta, GA 31606)*. Indianola has done it again. Glory of This is one of the best examples you will find of a band that actually can mix Emo Hardcore with metallic riffs—and even a bit of Indie Rock—and not sound like a bunch of driveling idiots. If you know the Long Island sound (and everyone does), these guys do it, but they do it right. Think a consistently more melodic Thursday, but not as mushy as Bayside. The metallic parts are mostly for accent, and for the most part, it's totally appropriate. It seems that Florida (these guys are from Jacksonville) is kicking out one hell of a scene these days between Glory of This and Evergreen Terrace. (CD)-**Myk**

Gods. "I See You Through Glass." *(Hand of Hope, POB 24913, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307)*. Gods is Jesse and Rob, two ex-members of Zao, plus some friends. Jesse, a founding Zao member, wrote these songs after he left the band to spend time with his family. These songs are far more melodic than their previous band's sound. The vocals are an ardent plea, but clean for the most part. Even the most extreme of the vocalization isn't remotely the growl that was accustomed to Zao. These songs are far more melodic and doomy, while at times almost resembling things that bands like Shift and Quicksand once did. But, this is totally uninteresting—it's your stereotypical ex-member of great band album. You cared about what they did in their great band, but out on their own the music is far from their best work. It's different yes, but unimpressive. (CD)-**Myk**

The Graves Brothers Deluxe "Light" *(Good Forks, POB 42455, Portland, OR 97242)*. Attempting to describe The Graves Brothers Deluxe is almost akin to brewing beer out of pine tree sap… just short of downright impossible! *Light* fantastically oozes an abundance of psycho-warped weirdness in an appealing sort of way. It's a loose and limber musical collage swathed in a circus-like atmosphere of Rock n' Roll Americana with a quirky, arty, nontraditional edge. A funky, swamp-boogie vibe is present, as well, and I just can't stop thinking of Tom Waits as a holy-roller revival preacher with the Talking Heads as his drunken tabernacle choir stuck in a tent on the outskirts of sanity. Does it make sense? I don't know, but it sure does blend well with

sudden attacks of incoherence and disorientation brought on by too much alcohol and not enough love. (CD)-**Moser**

Graveworm "(N)Utopia" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250)*. Graveworm has been around for some time now—almost 10 years, but they are still fairly new to the American market. They have a sound similar to Children of Bodom, with a lot of keyboards in the forefront of the songs. The vocals are similar to the combination used on several of the albums by Ancient, and the overall feel is somewhat flowery Gothic Black Metal. The closest thing I can come up with is Moonspell. There are venomous vocals that just don't sound as nasty as they really are because of the songs' tone. At times Graveworm reminds me of *Icon*-era Paradise Lost, and at a few points the intensity matches that of My Dying Bride, but it's never as gloomy. This is a very solid record, but if you don't like a ton of keyboards, you'll hate this. (CD)-**Myk**

Gunmetal Grey "Solitude" *(Indianola, 3072 Sheridan Rd, Valdosta, GA 31606)*. This is a side project of the Hoods and a band called SEED, which I've never heard of. It's a little all over the place to flow for my tastes. They have tracks that rival several tracks from As I Lay Dying, but then there are tracks that sound like Devil Driver. The clean vocals are very good, as are the screams, but they just don't seem to meld track to track. I feel like I'm listening to a combination sampler from Relapse and Jade Tree, or something equally as odd. This release has all the makings of the current San Diego sound though. Very melodic, almost Iron Maiden-like guitar riffs combined with massive Hatebreed-type powerchords, and even vocals that sound like they come from an old Earache band. But then there are a lot of the clean breakdowns segued into violence, which is very much overused and kills the album's flow. (CD)-**Myk**

Hank Jones "Saturdays of Thunder" *(Undecided, 1213 North D St., Lake Worth, FL 33460)*. Immediately the vocalist reminds me of Mike Ski from Brother's Keeper; he has the same tone and delivery. Aside from that, the band is straight up Hardcore. A dozen bands from the early '90s come to mind. There are no big beatdowns; fast songs and quick vocal deliveries make up the core of the songs. The drum lines are somewhat predictable, and full-on stop guitar riffs give this a feel that is so often missing in the scene today—bands like Ten Yard Fight, Shutdown and NJ Floorpunch automatically come to mind. A good, solid Hardcore record. (CD)-**Myk**

Hard Skin "Same Meat Different Gravy" *(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave. #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)*. Hard Skin is three strapping, brawny blokes from the mean cobblestone streets of London, and drunken disorderly conduct is their game. *Same Meat Different Gravy* is chock full of early '80s-style skinhead Oi of the hippy-stompin', boot-boy variety (but a hilarious, satirical take on it, though). The gruff, ale-swillin' vocalist sounds as if he's spent half his life in the nick for felonious assault, and there's plenty of Cockney hooligan soccer chants to aid and abet his slurred, virile ranting along the way. The guitar, bass, and drums brawl it out in a swaggering, spit-spewing cacophony that's as boisterous, disruptive, and belligerent as they come. With such villainous, bile-strewn song titles as "Law and Order (Up Your Arse)," "Two Chords—Two Fingers," "Down the Pub," and "Still Fighting Thatcher," it's distinctly certain that Hard Skin means business. So lock your doors and throw away the keys, 'cause the pubs and alleyways of old London town will never be the same. (CD)-**Moser**

Heap "On the Cheap" *(Rave On, POB 1388, New London, CT 06320)*. If you're not a lyrics person and are just looking for a band to rock your socks off while you're drinking the night away on the town, then Heap is your new favorite group. But while the band plays some infectious, heavily Thunders-influenced, sleazy Punk Rock n' Roll, the lyrics leave a lot to be desired, oft-times making no sense at all, other than trying to make shit rhyme—which, like it or not, may also be an ode to Mr. Thunders. Interesting note: it appears Mickey Leigh also makes an appearance on this record, even co-writing a handful of tunes. For those of you not in the know, Mickey Leigh is Joey Ramone's brother. And if you don't know who Joey Ramone is...well, never mind then... (CD)-**McClernon**

Hell Within "Asylum of the Human Predator" *(LifeForce, POB 680, Conshohocken, PA 19428)*. I don't know how Zeuss has time to breathe during the day. It seems like I get two releases a day that he has worked on. Hell Within is another New England act that adopted the growled/clean vocal Thrash/Hardcore sound that was made so prominent by Shadows Fall. Musically, it's exactly what I expected from a New England band that plays with Shadows Fall and Hatebreed. The powerchords are designed to send the crowd into a frenzy. The growled vocals are almost Bathory-like and the drums are straight out of the old school Thrash sound that's been so borrowed from in the recent past. The weakness on this album is the clean vocals; I'm not feeling it on those parts. When Brandon from Bleeding Through sings, you know that it had to be delivered that way. For On Hell Within, it more sounds like "I'll do my best because everyone does this now." For the most part, they don't even need to be there, and when they are, they aren't really impressive. The album is solid and I'm sure they put on a hell of a show live, but I think they have overstepped their own boundaries on some tracks. (CD)-**Myk**

Hella "Church Gone Wild"/"Chirpin Hard" *(Suicide Squeeze, POB 80511, Seattle, WA 98108)*. This is truly one of the more bizarre, artistically-driven releases I've heard in quite some time. What we have here is a double CD, with each having a personality all its own. *Church Gone Wild* is the brainchild of member Zach Hill, who wrote, composed and performed the album entirely on his own. This is the more aggressive disc of the two, with plenty of noise to keep enthusiasts of chaos ala The Locust glued to their CD players. While vocals are sparse, I find myself still interested in what Hella will do next here, as there are surprises around every corner. Turn over to *Chirpin Hard*, a disc written, performed and recorded entirely by Spencer Seim. Of the two, *Chirpin Hard* is my hands down favorite. Once again, vocals are basically nonexistent, and while instrumental albums usually run their course with me fairly quickly, I just can't seem to get enough of this. Think of an excellent Pop Punk act supported by an electronic genius, and you'll begin to get an idea of where *Chirpin Hard* is coming from. Of the two-discs, *Chirpin Hard* can be considered the more straightforward, listenable disc of the two, while *Church Gone Wild* gets down and dirty with experimentation. What amazes me here is that while both styles have been done before, neither is done so well by most bands, let alone one person, which is quite a feat. For music lovers, it doesn't get much better than this. (Double CD)-**McClernon**

High Tension Wires "Send A Message" *(www.dirtnaprecs.com)*. Only a shallow, mindless android could remain bored and motionless without one ounce of an urge to pogo and flail and wildly dance like a crazed Injun on the loose when confronted with the speedy, spazzed-out Punk sounds of High Tension Wires. *Send A Message* is a bubbling, pulse-reviving blur of three chords and bratty insolence drenched in beer-lubed snot, fluorescent spray paint fumes, and adrenaline-hopped day-glo sweat. It's a joyfully frenetic rush of glue-sniffin', late '70s/early '80s-style Punk that has obviously been reproduced from the overactive loins of the Ramones, the Buzzcocks, The Damned, The Weirdos, Redd Kross, and Black Market Baby. Each and every one of the 10 songs contained herein is brief and electrically accelerated like a sonic spontaneous combustion that leaves the ears a smoldering, gleeful mess. Gimme more; gimme more, oh High Tension Wires! (CD)-**Moser**

Hognose "El Sombrero!" *(Arclight, 1403, Rio Grande St., Austin, TX 78701)*. An awful band name and atrocious album title don't make for the best first impression...you better bring the Rock, and I mean **HARD**. Sadly, Hognose neither rocks, nor rocks hard; they just kind of plod along with a familiar mix of Black Sabbath crossed with a more modern day Stoner Rock edge. Not one song really stands out as being a fist-pumper, ass-shaker, or hard-drinking anthem. (CD)-**McClernon**

Hognose "El Sombrero!" *(Arclight, 1403 Rio Grande St., Austin, TX 78701)*. Hell hath no fury like Hognose unleashed! And what a dirty, rowdy bunch of apocalyptic Rock n' Roll cowboys they are! *El Sombrero!* is a robustly bellowing rebel yell with its heaving, dragon's breath rhythms and ominously menacing barroom-brawling demeanor. It's a double-barreled shotgun blast of purgatorial Southern-bred Stoner Rock that stomps ass and obliterates everything in its path without showing one iota of mercy. Imagine a sun-beaten, gun-slinging Black Sabbath on the run to the Mexican border with a goat-demon bandito on vocals, kicking up plenty of dust and hellfire fury along the way. There ain't no going home to mommy, I assure you, after Hognose has steered you into perdition and branded your hide with the devil's pitchfork. Yeeeee-haw, sons-of-bitches! (CD)-**Moser**

The Hollowpoints "The Black Spot" *(Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. Produced by Duane Peters and full of references to alcohol, *The Black Spot* will cater to fans of old-school Punk Rock. There is no gimmick, but rather a band that plays hard and fast with lyrics that revolve around personal politics. Fortunately, much closer to Motorhead than NOFX, sonically speaking. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

The Hollowpoints "The Black Spot" *(Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. Anger, youth, and rebellion erupt out of The Hollowpoints like a geyser of seething fire that can never be contained nor extinguished. And *The Black Spot* (the band's lively full-length debut) is a sonically disruptive cauldron of unstoppable raging energy and snarling maddog fury that could easily fuel a rocket booster all the way to the moon. The 14 melodically scouring songs included within this detonative disc are absolutely bursting with hoarse toxically shrieking vocals, jaunty high-voltage leads, and an explosive bombastic clarion of voracious bone-shattering rhythms. The Hollowpoints round out the package with a venomous litany of caustically biting lyrics, loads of insolent attitude, and a couple of booze-swiggin' sea chantey type ditties. I can only describe *The Black Spot* as the pure, unflinching essence of Punk Rock in a nutshell to be lived wild, carefree, and loud! (CD)-**Moser**

The Horde "Join or Die" *(1-2-3-4 Go!, www.1234gorecords.com)*. Shards of up tempo Rock and Roll coat an otherwise no-frills modern Hardcore scheme on this release from Gainesville, Florida's The Horde. Here, dark lyricism dripping with pathos is complemented by melodic guitar interplay and a sturdy rhythm section, the culmination of which evokes a dark yet anthemic feel. While the musicianship and vocals generally hold up, a lack of musical or thematic variation ensures that few songs stand apart from the pack. The results, though largely consistent, are a bit bland. (CD)-**Ramek**

Howard Hello "EP" *(Temporary Residence Ltd, POB 60097, Brooklyn, NY 11206)*. Howard Hello have an interesting sound that falls somewhere in the more quiet psychedelic pop realm. Sound-wise they are a mix of a mellow Heavy Vegetable/Thingy meets Pinback. One of the members of Howard Hello is actually in Pinback, so they really aren't ripping them off. On the other hand, the sounds here flow better. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Hurricane Party "Get This" *(Sanctuary, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036)*. Hurricane Party looks like a modern version of Motley Crue or something. With their feathered hair and Glam image, it was obvious from the start that this band seemed to be more about image than substance. But it's my duty to give the music a chance, and after doing so, this was one case where you could judge a book by its cover. This EP is over-produced, over-polished Glam-Rock, and very uninteresting. Hurricane Party try to be D Generation, but come off more like retarded MTV personality Jesse Camp. (CD)-**McClernon**

The Hurt Process "A Heartbeat Behind" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. On one hand, these guys make me angry; they could be the most versatile Death Metal band coming out of England today. The In Flames comparisons would have been a dime a dozen. There are parts on this album that would have most metalheads destroying each other....Except these guys love their pop. I would've given anything to hear a full Metal album from The Hurt Process; instead, this is one of the most dynamic metallic Emo records in existence. They are all about the clean vocals over the destructive chord progressions and the dueling growls and vocal choruses. The dichotomy that is this band is second to none, with close estimates being Atreyu and Hopesfall. These guys are setting a standard for diversity, much like the extreme opposites of King Diamond's vocals. (CD)-**Myk**

Impellitteri "Pedal to the Metal" *(SPV USA, 48 Broad St. #287, Red Bank, NJ 07701)*. Here are some older dudes trying to latch onto a sound that's a bit younger than they are. The band name is the last name of the guitarist and primary songwriter...good thing for him he has a unique last name. This is basic Power Metal with slight hints of Gothenburg in terms of melodies, but where the music is okay, the lyrics just fall short. "Punk" is trying to be the hokey sarcastic song that "American Badass" was for the Metal Sludge crowd, but it just isn't happening. (CD)-**KevTV**

Imperial "This Grave Is My Poem" *(Pluto, POB 1201, McKinney, TX 75070)*. Pluto Records is making quite a name for themselves, first with Please Mr. Gravedigger and now Imperial, who are a brutal Hardcore/Metalcore act from Florida. Originally known as the Red Letter, Imperial's dual-vocal barrage is a non-stop attack on both the ears and soul. While the majority of Metalcore acts leave me with a bad taste in my mouth (like the morning after drinking a lot of Heineken), Imperial just hits me in all the right places, and makes me wanna put my head through the nearest wall...which in this case is a good thing. There are only six songs here, but every one's a keeper, so be on the lookout for a full-length, hopefully in the not too distant future. (CD)-**McClernon**

Instant Agony "Not My Religion" *(Punk Core, POB 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)*. This four-song EP came out sometime ago, but taking into account the band's prior history and the surprising release of new material after an eternity of nothing, it's refreshing to hear. One of the better UK Street Punk bands of the '80s, the band never seemed to garner the same acclaim as UK counterparts such as the Business, 4-Skins or Blitz. Whatever the reason for such an oversight, Instant Agony should be proud of their past, and if this EP is any indication, the promising future the band still has. The four rockers present here seem like they were transported through a black hole or something, 'cause they could just have easily have been recorded 20 years ago by the sound of them, which is a great thing. The band hasn't lost a step, proving Ian Mackaye right when he proclaimed, "I might be an adult but I'm a minor at heart." This release proves that easily enough. (7")-**McClernon**

Japanische Kampfhorspiele "Hardcore Aus Der Ersten Welt" *(Bastardized Recordings, POB 200521, 56005 Koblenz, Germany)*. This is the first time I've ever heard this band. Apparently, this is like their third release, but I'm sure the first to get here to the States. The album is pure Power Violence. It's like a cross between classic Grindcore and the bands like CR and Black Army Jacket. The vocals have both the growl and the screech of bands like BAJ ,and the guitar parts are ripping fast like CR or Seeing Red. The band also has some elements of Death Metal in their progressions and breakdowns. This album may have been recorded in 2004, but it has 1994 written all over it. (CD)-**Myk**

Josephine Foster "Hazel Eyes, I Will Lead You" *(Locust Music, POB 220426, Chicago, IL 60622)*. Hmmm, well, *Hazel Eyes, I Will Lead You* ain't exactly my bag of all-natural bean sprouts in the sense that it's way too hippy-drippy sweet for my anarchic old bones. Josephine's shrill, curdled voice sounds like a cherubic, butterfly cross-pollination of Tiny Tim, Mary Hopkin, and Judy Collins. The sparse, hushed musical accompaniment is certainly soothing in a breezy, comforting kind of way, but it's all ultimately too mellow and docile and tame. If I communed with Mother Nature on a daily basis and frolicked naked with hobbits and gnomes in a field of sunshine daisies and rainbow trees, Josephine Foster would be my eternal earth goddess inspiration. But since I'm an ugly, beer-guzzling scoundrel of the most dastardly sorts, I cannot possibly taint my fermented blood vessels with such fluffy, flowery innocence one moment more. (CD)-**Moser**

Judge "What It Meant: The Complete Discography" *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232)*. The whole Judge discography on one disc, including the scrapped and infamous *Chung King Can Suck It*, which was basically the first Judge record, but was never really released 'cause it sounded like ass. There's also a great intro written by Judge guitarist John Porcell (also of Youth of Today, Project X and .Shelter). This CD is a good documentation of the late '80's NYHC sXe scene. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Kaamos "Lucifer Rising" *(Candlelight US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462)*. Kaamos is one of the few bands that proves you can play Death Metal fast, with melody, and not sound like you're from Sweden. Actually, they sound more like they would be from Florida circa 1988 and opening for Death. The chord progressions on this album are intense. The vocals have that early Death Metal sound that was prevalent before the rise of Grindcore. Albums like *Scream Bloody Gore*, *Consuming Impulse* (okay, I know that isn't from Florida, but it's still great), and Disincarnate come to mind while listening to this. It's guitar-driven Death Metal by guys who can **play**—not by guys that just know where their foot peddles are. If you like bands like Behemoth, early Nile and Malevolent Creation, Kaamos with light a serious fire under your ass. (CD)-**Myk**

Kill Yourself "Soft Touch of Man" *(Gringo, POB 7546, Nottingham, NG2 4WT, UK)*. As long as bands like this are around, the last thing you'll be aiming to do is "kill yourself" for lack of great music. It's obvious that this Leeds trio has been heavily influenced by both Jesus Lizard and Shellac—as well as a number of other Touch and Go acts—but the style is so well-realized that I really don't give a fuck what comparisons might be made. The guitar technique is straight off *At Action Park*, while the vocals are also in the Albini-style, but are more audible than anything Albini has done with either Big Black or Shellac. This seven-song EP has been in constant rotation since its first spin, so if you're not into scratchy guitars, bass-heavy rhythms, and eardrum shattering snare hits, this probably isn't for you. (CD)-**McClernon**

killwhitneydead "So Pretty So Plastic" *(Tribunal, POB 49322, Greensboro, NC 27419)*. Death Metal psychos killwhitneydead have returned with a new album produced by Jamie King that truly establishes them as the ultimate misanthropes of Metal. Where bands like Carcass deal mainly with gore, killwhitneydead have a deep-rooted, serious problem with people that reminds me of myself; and like myself, they have a sense of humor about misanthropy. Perfect! I have to say, this is probably the best Extreme Metal album I've heard in a long time, and I've heard some pretty damn good ones. The creatively written songs are inundated with all-too-fitting movie dialog samples. If I had the space, I'd write a dissertation about killwhitneydead's fascination with/hatred of pop culture and their use of it as a tool of aggression, but this is just a record review, so I'll leave it there. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Koffin Kats "Inhumane" *(Hairball 8, POB 681674, San Antonio, TX 78268)*. The Koffin Kats are three greasy-haired undead hoodlums who were obviously born under a bad sign on a Friday the 13th. Theirs is the macabre, bone-rattling sound of rabid mad-dog Psychobilly of the grave-robbing, flesh-eating variety. It's a psychotically scorchin' aural inferno sizzling to the brim with hound-doggin' sin-fueled vocals (think Boris Karloff as Elvis), murderous demon-possessed guitar flare-ups, and a grandly evil arsenal of rhythmic fury via a slapback bass and a tom/snare/double-cymbal drumkit. *Inhumane* brings out the slobbery, blood-thirsty maniac in me, and now all I wanna do is guzzle sourmash whiskey out of a jug, howl at the rising full moon, and dance a lively jig with the devil's sister until I morph into a hairy, dagger-clawed creature of the night. There ain't no puttin' me back in my cage as long as The Koffin Kats are on the loose! (CD)-**Moser**

The Konks *(Bomp!, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. The Konks relentlessly attack the ears in a thundering flurry of psychotic white-heat noise that's equal parts Rock

n' Roll, Garage Rock, and meth-fueled trailer park Blues. If The Sonics, The Stooges, MC5, and the Dwarves were dismembered with a chainsaw, chopped to bits with an axe, and then randomly tossed into a vat of lava-like molten steel, The Konks would be forged after an hour or two of cooling. And the music world is never to be the same happily ever after. Such explosive intensity! Such flammable spirit! Such beastly panache! The Konks must surely guzzle up to 10 gallons of high-octane gasoline a day while smokin' a stick or two of dynamite for dramatic effect, and then KABOOM! Rock n' Roll is indelibly altered for the better. (CD)-**Moser**

The Konks *(Bomp!, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. So what's with this Garage Rock Renaissance in the new millennium? Not that I'm complaining, 'cause I'm enjoying it— it's just a little weird is all. Anyway, the Konks are a Slop-Rock trio in the vein of the Oblivions. And like any good fuzz-driven sloppy Garage band, their music is conducive to drinking alone or in a group setting. I can't tell you much more than that, except that they sure beat the hell outta the White Stripes. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Kylesa "To Walk A Middle Course" *(Prosthetic, 11664 National Blvd. #413, Los Angeles, CA 90064)*. Kylsea are heavy—**really** heavy—but don't follow one particular genre. The opening track, "In Memory," incorporates Metal and Stoner Rock, and the musical transitions flow well due to the vocal exchanges and interplay between Phillip Cope and Laura Pleasants. There are certainly elements of fellow Georgia-dwellers Mastodon on this disc, but a bit more variety and the male/female vocals help avoid immediate comparisons. Worth checking out a song or two to see if Kylesa's style is for you, because this band is original enough to be worth exploring. (CD)-**KevTV**

Leaves Eyes "Elegy" *(Napalm, POB 583, Holland, OH 43528)*. This is just a teaser for the new album, but it's pretty powerful in its own right. The EP features two versions of the track "Elegy," the album version and the single version. It also features three non-album tracks and a demo version of the track "Solemn Sea." Here you find what may be Liv Kristine's greatest vocal outing of her career. The recording is stellar and her voice is haunting and powerful beyond the music. Her range has grown and the band—which features members of Atrocity—are working with some of their best material ever. If this sample is a real precursor of what's to come, you're looking at possibly the best female-fronted Metal band of the year. (CD)-**Myk**

Left Alone "Lonely Starts & Broken Hearts" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. Left Alone are another Punk band from Southern California. They play Southern California Punk Rock, with a little of just about everything you can think of. There are elements of Ska, Street Punk, Rancid, Sublime and even bands like DI. The vocalist reminds me of Tim Armstrong a lot, especially with his delivery. The bass sound could use a little boost on some of the songs, and the vocals can tend to be little too far up in the mix. But as a whole, the band has that NOFX/ Me First party sort of vibe to them. (CD)-**Myk**

Les Terribles *(Dionysus, POB 1975, Burbank, CA 91507)*. Now, I'm a huge fan of '60's Rock n' Roll—just look at my music collection. But I draw the line at revival bands, even if they are French. Sure, Billy Childish's music was '60's based, but there was (and still is) always the underlying Punk energy driving it, making it contemporary. Les Terribles strive to be nothing more than imitators of the Big Beat Records catalog. Is "Chante" actually a cover of Van Morrison's "I Can Only Give You Everything," or is it a shameless swipe? I took Spanish in high school, so I guess I'll never know, although I can say "La Nuit Le Jour" is definitely the Kinks' "All Day and All of the Night." Come to think of it, all the songs seem to be "borrowed," or are they actually covers? I can't tell. Hmmm. Is this legal? (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Little Compass "Discover" *(Negative Progression, POB 193158, San Francisco CA 94119)*. In looking through the thank yous on *Discover*, you'll see The Jealous Sound, Mock Orange, and Panic In Detroit amongst those getting their due. Poppy and energetic like the aforementioned groups, Little Compass also ought to appeal to pre *Wood/Water* fans of The Promise Ring or pre-*Futures* appreciators of Jimmy Eat World. While all this name-dropping may not sound flattering, I dare to say that "Demolition" would be a hit single in a just world. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Mae "The Everglow" *(Tooth & Nail, www.toothandnail.com)*. Uh-oh, I think I'm feeling queasy. This madness has to stop. Piano-driven pop music should be left to Elton John or George Michael or something, and should NEVER—under any circumstances—slink its way into the Punk/Indie Rock scene or my CD player. The occasional guitar ballad doesn't make up for it either. Must...push...eject button. Ahh, much better! (CD)-**McClernon**

The Makers "Everybody Rise" *(Kill Rock Stars, 120 NE State #418, Olympia, WA 98501)*. Holy shit, I can't believe this band is still around! It's probably been damn near seven years since I've listened to these Spokane, Washington derelicts, and unfortunately—at least for **me**—a lot seems to have changed. Gone are the days where The Makers were known as the snottiest, drunkest rock-n-rollers on the block. Over the years, it seems maturity has caught up even with the band that toured in a friggin' hearse as teenagers! But it could be worse. After all, *Everybody Rise* is in fact a very good Rock n' Roll record, with Glam influences textured throughout each tune. While not as raging, sloppy and chaos-inducing as past efforts, it's the tightest I've ever heard the band, and the recording is by far the best they've ever sounded, though I'm not sure if it suits the band well. The vocalist has become so tame that he sounds like a completely different guy, and the tunes themselves now take on a heavy R&B influence. There are also a few acoustic numbers, which I never expected on a Makers record. The band pulls off this latest style extremely well, and it's a solid record from start to finish; I just personally don't find it as appealing as the band known for invoking barroom brawls wherever they roamed. (CD)-**McClernon**

Maledictive Pigs "Soul Sugery" *(Cudgel, POB 100147, 06871 Luth, Wittenburg, Germany)*. I really have *Under the Volcano* to thank for getting me into Death Metal. Before I started writing here, I used to turn my nose up at Extreme Metal, like I was too cool or something; now I can't get enough of it. Thanks, Rich! So Maledictive Pigs—are they Death Metal or are they Grindcore? What's the difference? I don't know, but I **do** know that this CD is relentlessly pulverizing in its intensity. I mean, this album does not let up once. Brutality in blast beats—cool! (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Manda and the Marbles "Angels with Dirty Faces" *(Addison, www.addisonrecords.com)*. After Go Kart released 2002's *More Seduction*, I had my suspicions as to just how good this band was. Their latest release, *Angels with Dirty Faces*, seals it. Manda and the Marbles are the band that will make Pop Punk cool again, because nothing this damn catchy can stay hidden for long. Imagine Johnny Ramone's razor-sharp guitar sound coupled with the sugary-sweet innocence of The Go-Go's, and you have Manda and the Marbles. Whether you're the dirtiest gutter punk or super-feminist riot grrl, *Angels with Dirty Faces* will have all extremes singing along to these infectious love songs . I really can't say enough good things about this band or this album. If you like your music hook-laden and dripping with melody, all the while retaining that Punk Rock attitude, then this is the record for you. And how can you argue with a band that covers both Fast Cars ("Kids Just Wanna Dance") and the Avengers ("Cheap Tragedies")? Excellent on all accounts. (CD)-**McClernon**

Mary Timony "Ex Hex" *(Lookout!, 3264 Adeline St., Berkeley, CA 94703)*. I'm a little surprised that Lookout! released this. While I understand that the label has branched out stylistically in recent years, this sounds more like something Kill Rock Stars or K Records would've put out. With that said, Mary Timony, ex-guitarist/vocalist of Helium, plays an eclectic combo of early '90's Dischord-ish Indie Rock, Sonic Youth-esque guitar hooks and vocals reminiscent of Kim Gordon and Liz Phair. While Timony's style of music is not necessarily what I enjoy most times, it's obvious she's an excellent songwriter who has a knack for writing honest to goodness, wonderfully beautiful pop tunes one after the other. Only half the tunes here really appeal to me, but in someone else's hands this could be Top Ten material. (CD)-**McClernon**

Mashlin "Pushing Through The Seasons" *(One Eleven, www.111records.com)*. I have three CD players: one on my computer, one inside my television (technically a DVD player), and a DiscMan. None of these players can handle an advance CD that has the following written on its tray card: "This CD is copy protected and will not play in a computer." Therefore, I am unable to listen to (or review) Mashlin's latest release. But in looking at the website for One Eleven Records, I see that this release was produced by Chris Fudurich (Nada Surf, Finch, Ozma), and that the band has "elicited comparisons" to Coldplay and Muse while "citing" Radiohead, Nirvana, and Foo Fighters amongst their influences. Sounds like a record I'd be into if technology permitted. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Melvins "Mangled Demos from 1983" *(Ipecac, POB 1778, Orinda, CA 94563)*. I've been a fan of the Melvins for quite some time now. As a fan, I've stood by everything they've recorded, from their Black Sabbath-on-Quaaludes dirges to their wild, bizarre experimentation, and, somehow, I've never been disappointed with what they did. Most bands suck after a few years; fewer bands can release 10 good albums. The Melvins somehow have the right sense of humor and chemistry to avoid the middle-aged musician blahs. That said, this CD takes us back to the earliest days of the band, pre-Dale Crover—those duties were handled by Mike Dillard. Matt Lukin (yes, the very same Matt Lukin from Mudhoney) played bass. They were all high school buddies who didn't fit in with the slack-jawed redneck vibe of their hometown. Hardcore Punk was arguably at its peak in 1983, and these early recordings definitely fit into that mindset. I read some interview with Buzz where he said that Greg Ginn (my guitar hero) was his biggest influence. The Black Flag thing is definitely noticeable, especially the slower, heavier, meaner *My War* vibe. Black Sabbath is also evident, which makes sense, as they were a huge influence on Greg Ginn. I guess what I'm trying to say is, this CD is gonna appeal to Melvins fans as well as Hardcore kids who think they're too cool for the Melvins. The Melvins have always been a Hardcore Punk band in my book anyway, and here's the proof. Submit. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Meredith's "A Closed Universe" *(Debauchery, www.meredith's.org)*. The Meredith's play average Pop Rock that's way more Pop than it is Rock, a negative for me. The songs are decent compositions that can be likened to those by bands such as Superdrag and the Shins, but not nearly as inventive or catchy. This five-song EP isn't a bad listen, but nothing to wet your panties over. (CD)-**McClernon**

Meshuggah "Catch 33" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 West El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250)*. Meshuggah continues on their path of destructive, complex, downtuned songwriting on their latest disc. Dammit, I put my head down to think and write for a couple minutes, and the first six tracks have passed by, sounding like one. What gives? Apparently, the CD is one long song like their *I* EP from last year, and the song is broken up into tracks that are separated more by lyrical content than by song structure. Most of the songs bleed into one another, so the album could just be one long track. I really don't get the appeal of splitting it up; nobody is going to say "Oooh, I like track four" because it's like someone fast forwarding to the bass solo in "Orion" and only listening to and liking that part. Not bad for ONE song, but it's needlessly cut up into 12 chapters. (CD)-**KevTV**

Meshuggah "Catch Thirty-Three" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250)*. I've been listening to Meshuggah for at least 10 years. I'm not sure exactly when the first time I heard them was, but they've always proven to be one of the most talented bands in existence. The two most recent releases, *Chaosphere* and the single track *I*, were both somewhat of a letdown. They weren't even up to par with the Fredrik Thorndahl solo album. But with the release of *Catch…* Meshuggah is back. This is one of the most brutal and technical albums released in recent years. The band once again expand their musical prowess to the utmost level that only they are capable of. Fans of bands like Pantera and other knuckle-dragger heavy stuff will finally see what heavy truly is. These tracks have all the power of the idiot-driven power chords, but they are mixed with brutal progressions and technicality. The vocals have that distinctive Meshuggah growl, except for a few spoken parts and the weird robot intro to "Mind's Mirror." Meshuggah rank up there with Opeth in the talent department, and once again, they're another band that has the ability to play anything, and they devote it to expanding the heavy. You should worship Meshuggah and stop listening to that ridiculous jock garbage like System of A Down. This is the **real** Metal without all the comical crap. (CD)-**Myk**

The Messengers *(Punk Core, POB 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)*. Hmm... should I be the one reviewing this Rich? Haha... all biases aside, the Messengers are one of the better female-fronted Punk bands going today, and along with the new Blood or Whiskey record, are two of the best (and most diverse) Punk Core releases to date. The female vox along with the Old School Cali-Punk sound give this a distinctly Avengers sounding quality. While the lyrics tend not to stray much from the usual socio-political format that many bands of the genre favor, they seem sincere and the tunes are well-written enough to keep the listener glued to the stereo. Though some may lump this in to a category with other female-fronted acts such as Distillers, The Messengers' Punk Rock n' Roll stands on its own, owing more to the American bands that came before them rather than their British counterparts. (CD)-**McClernon**

Mi Amore "The Lamb" *(Cyclop Media, 16 Du Charron Levis Quebec, G6V 7X5, Canada)*. Oh how I love dirty, mean-sounding Punk Rock. This reminds me of Discharge, The English Dogs, Buzz*oven and the like. More metallic than Discharge, but very similar to Broken Bones, this album is just plain ugly. With an all black cover with just a gold printed goat, one knows right off the bat they are getting something off kilter. Mi Amore is fucking heavy, but they have that groove of Southern bands like EyeHateGod and Alabama Thunderpussy. This is just such good stuff and it's produced by Kurt from Converge. (CD)-**Myk**

Millencolin "Kingwood" *(Epitaph/Burning Heart, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. Millencolin's press materials talk about how the band feels that it's moved along to a new sound and a new overall approach, but *Kingwood* sounds like the usual Pop Punk the Swedish quartet has been turning out for more than a decade. In other words, this is the upbeat, energetic release that you should have expected—it's truly a wonder, though, that band hasn't yet managed to score a radio hit in the United States. Fans looking for a curveball from Millencolin, however, ought to check out vocalist/bassist Nikola Sarcevic's introspective, mostly-acoustic solo album, which was wrongfully ignored by fans and critics alike. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Mistress "In Disgust We Trust" *(Earache, 43 West 38th St, 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018)*. Mistress play traditional Grindcore, the kind that made Earache a name in the late '80s. Aside from that, they aren't really outstanding or original. What makes them appealing is that they **do** play old style Grind; few bands play that now because they're either really playing Death Metal or the hyper blast stuff like Circle of Dead Children or Vulgar Pigeons. Mistress isn't as abrasive as early Carcass, but are more in line with post- Dorian Napalm Death. This is an alternative to digging out your old albums; it's a 21st century spin on a traditional style of music. (CD)-**Myk**

NRA "Machine" *(Gearhead, POB 421219, San Francisco, CA 94142)*. For the past couple of years, I've been mightily impressed whenever an NRA song happened to cross paths with my ears via one compilation or another. So I'm understandably excited beyond belief (peein'-in-my-pants excited, if you must know!) that the fine folks at Gearhead Records sent this latest sonically priceless NRA escapade to me. *Machine* is absolutely bursting at the seams with crunchy blur-speed power chords, brash I-don't-care-about-anything vocals, and a steady rumbling backdrop ruckus of bruising topsy-turvy bass riffs and gigantic dinosaur-stomp drumbeats. It's bouncy good-time Rock n' Roll with a riveting pinch of infectious '70s-style Power Pop melodies and enough of a Ramonesy spraypaint-huffin' Punk edge to make it slightly dangerous. All in all, it's the youthfully upbeat sound of an era when t-top Camaros, pinball machines (hence the title, perhaps), ripped jeans, faded concert t-shirts, denim jackets, Budweiser beer, and smiley-face bongs were king. So crank up the NRA, and have a nice day, damn it! (CD)-**Moser**

NRA "Machine" *(Gearhead, POB 421219, San Francisco, CA 94142)*. Remember when you'd listen to a band and simply describe them as "Punk-fucking- Rock!"? Well, NRA is that band. Bringing to mind the likes of Naked Raygun and similar Midwestern powerhouses, these European veterans take no prisoners on *Machine*. From the initial onslaught of "Why Did I Listen to You?," to the brilliant "I Missed My Slot," the band delivers one delectable hit after the next. Raw yet melodic, guitar-driven Punk, with a vocalist who sounds like an older version of Kody of the Lillingtons, NRA has been kicking around far too long to go unnoticed up until now. Thanks to Gearhead, hopefully that problem will be rectified. (CD)-**McClernon**

Negator "Old Black" *(Magick, 11041 Santa Monica Blvd, PMB #703, Los Angeles, CA 90025)*. I have to give these guys credit; they have zero info on their CD about themselves, but if you go to their website (which they also don't list in their CD) they have an amazing amount of anti-Nazi stuff, which is impressive for a Black Metal band. The band hails from Germany and play traditional Black Metal akin to Gorgoroth and Marduk. The recording is pretty good, and the music is fast, as one would expect. The songs aren't exactly rocket science, but they are well-executed. Negator is pretty generic, but they set out to play Black Metal in the old way, at which they have succeeded. (CD)-**Myk**

The New York Rel-X "Sold Out of Love" *(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave. #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)*. The New York Rel-X are well on their way of becoming my favorite Punk band of the 21st Century thus far. *Sold Out of Love* is their full-length debut, and it aggressively grabs me by the testicles with razor-sharp claws clenched in fury. Erika's schoolgirl-dagger-vixen vocals playfully tease and tantalize the ears, all-at-once seducing, berating, and rattling the listener to the brink of total knee-bending submission. Guitarist Jon unleashes an explosive, action-packed array of perfectly executed power chords and fiery, wildly blaring leads. Adi tackles the bass in a fearsome flurry of rumbling, decibel-thundering theatrics. And drummer Scot pounds the skins like a turbo-charged jackhammer blasting its way through the Great Wall of China. The New York Rel-X are a raging bundle of energy personified, and *Sold Out of Love* is the Big Bang of Punk. (CD)-**Moser**

Nihilist "Demos"*(Candlelight US, POB 707, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462)*. Who's the greatest band in the history of Swedish Death Metal? Well, that of course is Entombed. What is the one thing that all Entombed fans want, but only a few have? The demos. This CD collects all four of the Nihilist demos (the band that came before Entombed) and the first Entombed demo from 1989. The sound, considering, is fantastic. The CD contains 14 incredibly raw tracks, and LG Petrov's vocals have never been this raw past these recordings. All of these tracks are from 1988 or 1989, and the band's influences are more obvious than in their later work. Another on the long list of new albums that are instant must owns. (CD)-**Myk**

No Warning "Suffer, Survive" *(Machine Shop/Warner)*. This is the same band that released a full-length on Bridge Nine a couple of years ago, and they haven't changed their sound too much. They've infused a little more melody into their songs, so they don't sound so traditional on this album. They also don't sound like all the bands out there like A Static Lullabye or the like. Ben can sing, and he does, but his hard vocals are **so** extreme—they still have that Hardcore sound, and I think it helps the songs stick together. This is not Hatebreed Hardcore either, but closer to Bane and American Nightmare, both of which have old school flare but just a touch of the current sound to really breach the time barrier. This is a band for those who really hate the Emo elements that a lot of bands are using, and is more in line with the Hardcore I grew up with. (CD)-**Myk**

Nocturne "Guide to Extinction" *(Triple X, POB 862529, Los Angeles, CA 90086)*. Nocturne musically dwells in a purgatorial realm of the universe where apocalyptic

forces of darkness reign supreme, an infernal otherworldly region in which pain and agony are quite the pleasurable experience. The band vividly fuses Goth, Metal, and Industrial into a mesmerizing carnival of spiritual torture, grandiose debauchery, and unrepentant hedonism. Indeed, *Guide to Extinction* sounds as if it were recorded in a crumbling, sin-encrusted corridor of Hell with a vocalist whose range veers from naughty lollipop-sucking schoolgirl to monstrous brimstone-breathing demon goddess. At this very moment, my ears seem to be witnessing an aural Armageddon that purges the soul of all things pure and godly. I must be sick and depraved, because I'm craving Nocturne like a murderous vampire thirsting the innocent, untainted blood of a virgin. Lock me up, and throw away the key! (CD)-**Moser**

NOFX "Arming the Proletariat with Potato Guns" b/w "I Am Going to Hell For This One" *(Fat Wreck Chords, POB 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690).* The second of many more 7"s to come from one of the most prolific, entertaining, and genuinely unique Punk bands around today, or any other day for that matter. While I've heard a lot of people proclaim the first single to be superior to this, I tend to disagree, if only for the fact that the A-side is so damn funny that I can't help listening to it time and again. Even though I'm certain the Jewish and Mexican jokes are tongue in cheek, I'm sure the *MRR* crowd will hate it, but they've probably been hatin' on this band for years now anyway, so who cares? Not the band, I'd wager. The B-side is no slouch either, and for collector nerds like me, this record is nothing short of a slice of heaven. Thanks to Fat Mike and the gang. (7")-**McClernon**

Oathean "Fading Away into the Grave of Nothingness" *(The End, 331 Rio Grande #58, Salt Lake City, UT 84101).* Oohhhhh now I just might have seen it all! A Korean Death Metal band complete with the standard unreadable logo, posed-out picture in front of a lone tree, and photographs of churches and the forest. Black Metal has reached the Far East. This is some typical, actually, quite stereotypical Black Metal—heavy guitars, fast drumming, atmospheric keyboards, and cheesy lyrics like, "I converse with the melancholy deep within myself." Been there, burned that (church). (CD)-**KevTV**

One Way Letter "Where Everybody Knows Your Name" *(Negative Progression, POB 193158, San Francisco CA 94119)* When I picked up this album I thought it was a re-issue of Face To Face's *Big Choice* album because the cover art is similar. Fortunately, that was an incorrect impulse; don't get me wrong— that album had its moments. One Way Letter has an original sound in that they're doing the Emo-Pop thing, but they have a captivating frontwoman in bassist Selena Langley. Selena comes across somewhere between Glassjaw's Daryl Palumbo and One True Thing's Melanie Wills—sometimes tender, sometimes fragile, but always to be heard. This is the rare sort of band that I'd go to see live on a work night. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Out of Reach "Never Ending" *(Goodwill).* This Italian outfit play middling melodic Hardcore. Too often this band succumbs to the Emo-Pop urge, and a fairly forthright scheme is dragged into those doldrums. There are a number of decent hooks, and an underlying fast-paced energy that shows promise, but the syrupy undercurrent often ruins the experience.(CD)-**Ramek**

Paint the Town Red "Pt. II: Home is Where the Hate Is" *(Thorp, POB 6786, Toledo, OH 43612).* While there are a lot of bands playing the Metal-tinged Hardcore style that Paint the Town Red has thrust upon us here, few do it so well and with such complexity. I think what appeals to me the most is the apparent Refused influence, which shines through in the guitarist's riffs. The vocals are also above par, having more range than the usual Cookie Monster growl that so many Metalcore bands are known for. While this is not a perfect album start to finish, there are enough choice tracks present to keep a fan of the genre entertained. (CD)-**McClernon**

Parlour "High Fives" *(Temporary Residence Ltd, POB 60097, Brooklyn, NY 11206).* Parlour used to be a solo project for Tim Furnish (Crain, Aerial M and The For Carnation) but he's since made this his foremost project and turned it into a seven-piece band. Parlour kind of reminds me of what Cerberus Shoal used to sound like, but only a bit faster. This is good, catchy, laid back instrumental stuff. (CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Pennywise "Self-Titled," "Unknown Road," "Full Circle," "About Time" (remastered reissues) *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).* I can't believe how long these guys have been around and how impressive a catalog they've built. Epitaph is reissuing the first four out of print albums that have been remastered and had the artwork redone. *Pennywise* is the only of the releases that features any bonus tracks with "Psycho 89." The albums have always been great, now they sound clean and bright.... not that they ever sounded bad, they now just sound sharper and more pronounced. For those that don't own these albums, this is a stellar occurrence. For diehards, you'll need to pick up the bonus track. For those who have these records, maybe you want to hold off and get something you don't already own. If you want that audio quality though, take those old versions to the used store and pick up these versions for a new listening experience. (CD)-**Myk**

Pointing Finger *(Still Holding On, 65 au Long pre 4053 Embourg Belgium).* Yes, this band is actually called Pointing Finger...and they do indeed take themselves seriously. The good news, however, is that this Euro sXe outfit brings a walloping youth crew rumpus to the fore that ought to get even the most jaded scenester twitching. Those who have long since forgone the trappings of this straight forward formulaic style take heed: there is a characteristic melodic sensibility to this shout-along-driven formula on this record, a predilection for snappy hooks that strengthens the standard build/breakdown fray, and even manages to bring a genuine sense of *fun* to the mix. No, they're not reinventing the wheel, but so what? This record, a collection of the band's previously released 7"s, is upbeat, fast paced, and memorable. (CD)-**Ramek**

The Ponys "Celebration Castle" *(In The Red, POB 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050).* What if the earth were flat and square and there was no gravitational pull whatsoever and we arrogant human creatures aimlessly tumbled and fell out of the stratosphere into worlds unknown? The Ponys have exactly such a divinely life-altering effect on me in the sense that their music conjures a wondrous feeling of godlike euphoria within me as could only be attained at the magical moment of birth. *Celebration Castle* is an uplifting musical epiphany, a brilliantly shimmering burst of rhythmically rich and melodically textured perfection that exudes a joyous energy not known to these ears since first hearing sound. The stuffy-nosed, sarcasm-tinged vocals are driven to the point of sheer ecstasy by an army of jangly spirited guitars with a consistent smattering of wailing otherworldly leads and plenty of exuberantly mirthful bass and drum interplay. Magnificently comparable to The Cure, That Petrol Emotion, and *Heroes*-era David Bowie (if he were an introspective, flannel-wearing farmer's son from the Midwest), The Ponys enmesh themselves in a swarming surge of radiantly dazzling amplification that's intoxicating, effective, and insightful. *Celebration Castle* is all a person could possibly want out of life. (CD)-**Moser**

RIFU "Dead End Street" *(Go Kart, POB 20, New York, NY 10012).* After listening to this disc several times, I'm still torn as to what I think of it. At their best, RIFU reminds me of one of Europe's best melodic Punk bands, Netherlands' Funeral Oration. At their worst—which is mainly when they're screaming— they come off as annoyingly political in nature, with tunes that lack any real hooks to speak of. After going over this in my head, I've come to a "Dead End Street." Hehe, get it? The album's called *Dead End Street*, and I said...average at best. (CD)-**McClernon**

The Red Death "External Frames of Reference" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. #302, Simi Valley, CA 93065).* It amazes me that with release after release, there are so many good bands emerging, and so many of them are ending up on Metal Blade. Hot on the heals of As I Lay Dying, The Red Chord, and Black Dahlia Murder comes The Red Death. These guys may be the most flat out brutal of the bunch, sounding more like Dissection than At The Gates. The vocals can be downright spooky, but at no point are they not brutal. The guitar progressions are pretty epic and the drum progressions are pretty impressive as well. They manage to put some break downs in without disrupting the flow of the songs, and even include vocals during some of them without at all being distracting. These guys are like the natural progression of Thrash, like Thrash was the natural progression on Metal. Be warned. (CD)-**Myk**

Rock N' Roll Soldiers "The Two EPs" *(Electric Lighting Station, 46 Kensington Ct., London, England, W8 5DP).* Despite being heralded as Rock's saving grace, Eugene, Oregon's Rock N' Roll Soldiers seem to miss their mark. This CD compiles the band's first two EPs, originally released on Gearhead, vinyl only. Some of the songs are okay, but vocalist Marty Larson-Xu overdoes his Mick Jagger impersonations, especially on "Three Goddamns." Sometimes he sounds like the bastard lovechild of Jagger and Patti Smith, which is pretty annoying. Unfortunately, most of the Stones inspiration sounds like it comes from the "Start Me Up"/"It's Only Rock n' Roll" garbage period. Bleh. Kick out the jams? Not quite. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Rocketz "Rise of the Undead" *(Hairball 8, POB 681674, San Antonio, TX 78268). Rise of the Undead* is the boisterously rambunctious epitome of demented and deranged white-trash Psychobilly rowdiness that's sonically akin to an atomic blast roaring straight outta Hades in a hand-basket. It's a cranked and crazed cacophony of robust nasal-growl vocals, twangy lightning-fast guitar riffs, fiery horror-tremolo leads, raucously creepy flick-snaps of an upright bass, and rickety titanium monster-mash drumbeats. Such musically savage beasts as "Die Zombie Die," "Vampire's Sorrow," "Wildman," and "I Want U Dead" have put the merciless fear of Beelzebub in my heart, corrupting my soul sick and senseless aplenty. Yep, I am now a full-fledged demon daddy, and The Rocketz are my one-way ticket to Hell. See ya there, kiddies! (CD)-**Moser**

Rookie "A Lot to Live" *(Pickup, 385 E. 15th St., Columbus, OH 43201).* While I'm still a fan of Pop/Punk ala the Ramones/Screeching Weasel/Queers school of higher learning, this release doesn't do much for me. Rookie comes off as an over-produced, watered-down version of the aforementioned bands, sounding contrived and forced on most occasions. The vocalist has a major hard-on for Green Day's

Billie Joe, but it's a shame the band can't seem to write one song anywhere near as good as he has. It's not terrible, just very vanilla. (CD)-**McClernon**

Sarah Blasko "The Overture and the Underscore" *(Low Altitude, www.lowaltitude.com)*. Oddly enough, I'm pleasantly surprised by this CD of lavishly produced Indie-Pop. Singer/songwriters tend to rub me the wrong way, but Australia's Sara Blasko is actually a very talented songwriter, with a great voice to boot. Her songs capture the melancholy of Mazzy Star and Portishead while not steeping the listener in a tea of sorrow. The full production and heavy orchestration paint slightly psychedelic sonic backdrops to Sarah's direct lyrics. Staunch Republi-Punks, who conservatively like their music one way, won't be interested in this album, but fans of Indie Rock, Ork-Pop and good songwriting will. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Scorngrain "Cyberwarmachine" *(Dynamic Arts, POB 168, FIN-33101, Tampere, Finland)*. If you are an old Fear Factory fan, you remember what it was like the first time you heard the Industrial Metal they ripped through. If you are about my age, you remember what it was like the first time you heard the Ministry release *The Mind Is A Terrible Thing to Taste* and what a revelation it was in heavy music. Scorngrain will send you back to that time. It's got heavy Industrial dance parts mixed with blistering Death Metal guitar riffs and vocals that sound like they could easily be on a Deicide album. This album is a little heavier in the keyboard department than I care for, but it's still a brutal and unrelenting record. This is the kind of band the Goth/Industrial scene has been awaiting to revitalize it. If people can find it, they'll adore it. It's the epitome of what an Industrial-Metal release should be. (CD)-**Myk**

Shikari "1999-2003" *(Level Plane, POB 7926, Charlottesville, VA 22906)*. This CD collects a bunch of the band's really hard to get, out of print vinyl. This is nothing if it ain't powerful. Shikari play what I used to refer to as ABC No Rio Punk. Bands like Rorschach, Born Against, Heroin, Angel Dust...you should get the picture. The vocals are kind of high-pitched and the music is super fast, for the most part. Shikari is audio violence. A comparison that comes to mind when listening to this is The Minor Times. Powerful stuff, not meant for the Emo-loving crowd out there. (CD)-**Myk**

Shortie "(Without A Promise)" *(Earache, 43 West 38th St., 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018)*. Maybe you guys didn't get the memo, but wearing makeup, getting your hair highlighted, and playing generic, watered-down Emo/whiny Rock with distraught screams here and there is like, so 2004. I just don't have the patience for this stuff any longer. If the band can't take the time to muster up even a ounce of originality, then neither can I when it comes to this review, other than to say don't waste your time. (CD)-**McClernon**

Sick of It All "Outtakes For the Outcast" *(Fat Wreck Chords, POB 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690)*. One of the best Hardcore band ever, Sick of It All are still kicking around after all these years, and not once in their history have they compromised their sound or ideals in the least, and that says more than most of you will ever know. *Outtakes For the Outcast* is an odds and sods compilation of rare B-sides and live tracks from the band, spanning from 1993-2001. Fifteen songs, originals as well as a plethora of covers; even a Hip-Hop tune remixed by House of Pain. While the entire disc is consistently entertaining, I think the most telling thing about the band are the covers, which really show how diverse these NYHC legends are. Whether they're covering Oi! legends such as Sham 69 or Last Resort, "All Hell Breaks Loose" by the Misfits, or even a Husker Du song ("Target"), the band has the unique ability of making every track their own, rivaling the greatness of each original, which is seldom heard. Rumor has it that this will be the last record for them on Fat, so wherever they go, I wish them luck—not that they'll need it. (CD)-**McClernon**

Sinai Beach "Immersed" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. There is a whole lot of Metal going on here. Sinai Beach is a band that I would have to put in the "New American Metal" category, much like Lamb of God and Bleeding Through. The clean vocals are a little too pseudo-spooky for my taste, kind of Danzig-esque, but a little Euro-Goth at the same time. They don't detract from the songs, as these parts are well-written; I think just a different approach would have been better. The real bonus here is the viciousness on parts of the songs. There is a full battery on the drum parts and the harsh vocals are easily on par with Lamb of God and Black Dahlia. The powerchords back up their name with relative ease, and the record even has a few surprises, veering off the beaten path of the band's sound. Sinai Beach will be a name to look out for in the near future. (CD)-**Myk**

Sinai Beach "Immersed" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. Overall, *Immersed* is a hybrid of tough-guy Metal and Hardcore that doesn't appeal to me in the slightest. But what do I know? (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Slowmotion Apocalypse "My Own Private Armageddon" *(Tribunal, POB 49322, Greensboro, NC 27419-1322)*. Metal from Italy with lyrics in English. Slowmotion Apocalypse sounds like part Shadows Fall Thrash, part Gothenburg-styled Metal. Not bad at all. This would probably be cool to check out in a live setting, but it just doesn't do much to distinguish itself from the majority of Metal CDs I've listened to the past year. (CD)-**KevTV**

Slowmotion Apocalypse "My Own Private Armageddon" *(Tribunal, POB 49322, Greensboro, NC 27449)*. This may be the best Metal band to ever come out of Italy that doesn't have a member of Soilwork in it. Slowmotion Apocalypse is an impressive release starting at the front cover. The art is great, a cross between art by bands like Bleeding Through and Cradle of Filth. The music is nothing short of explosive and punishing. They incorporate elements from many styles of heavy music, but don't fit the categories so obviously as other bands do. At times the guitar solos sound like they could come from a Kreator album. The keyboards smack of Cradle and Dimmu, and the vocals are not dissimilar from what you might find from a Ferret Records band. But, put these elements together with all the other goodness happening on this CD and you're in for a hell of an album. Bands like At The Gates, Bleeding Through, The Haunted, Caliban and Witchery all come to mind. *My Own Private Armageddon* is a fierce release that will start all kinds of violence on the dancefloor. (CD)-**Myk**

Smoke or Fire "Above the City" *(Fat Wreck Chords, POB 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119)*. These guys are in the wrong era. Upon initial listening, you automatically think of Jawbreaker, or the first time you heard Avail, Dag Nasty, and the bands that followed the initial wave of melodic DC Hardcore. Edgy vocals that still maintain a tune are mixed with catchy, melodic guitar parts and great breakdowns. Fans of early Fugazi will eat this up, as will fans of Lifetime and anything that Dave Smalley has done. (CD)-**Myk**

Sons of Thunder "Fists of Poison" *(Sons of Thunder, www.sonsofthunder.tk)*. Five kids from Glen Cove, Long Island get together and make some mean, brutal Hardcore Punk. Who woulda thought? Dual vocal onslaught, a minimalist-metronomic drummer, a guitarist and bassist who power-riff their way through the four songs on this disc—what's not to like? This band is definitely for fans of NYHC circa 1984. Fuck you and your crew. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Stinking Lizaveta "Caught Between Worlds" *(At A Loss, POB 642, Crownsville, MD 21032)*. *Caught Between Worlds* is so many things. It's Stoner Rock. It's Doom Metal. It's Space Rock. It's Don Caballero meets the Melvins. The album is slow, and methodical, and well-played, with absolutely no apologies to anyone. This is an album that can't be placed in one genre, because the minute you think it's one thing, it switches gears to an acoustic ballad followed by a Neurosis-like breakdown. It's one of those albums you feel and absorb. If you like the direction that Small Stone Records is going, then you most assuredly will dig this. (CD)-**Myk**

Stutterfly "And We Are Bled Of Color" *(Maverick, Madonna's people will find* ***you*** *if they want to...)*. Along the lines of Maverick Emo-Pop labelmates Story of the Year yet carrying the heavy-but-radio-friendly production of Breaking Benjamin, I wouldn't be surprised if Stutterfly were soon on the playlist of every active Rock station in this country. Take that as you will. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

SuperHeavyGoatAss "60,000 Years" *(Arclight, 1403 Rio Grande St., Austin, TX 78701)*. In the wake of the millennium's Stoner Rock revival, SuperHeavyGoatAss blast outta Austin, Texas to put their own spin on lead-weight Rock n' Roll. Their debut album, *60,000 Years*, is marked by Black Sabbath heaviness, ZZ Top riffage and a Southern Rock love of playing yer (superheavygoat)ass off. I foresee quite a future for this band, as they far surpass most of their better-known contemporaries in both musicianship and songwriting. Whoever said they don't make Rock like this anymore was wrong. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

SuperHeavyGoatAss "60,000 Years" *(Arclight, 1403 Rio Grande St., Austin, TX 78701)*. SuperHeavyGoatAss lay down a thick, thundering squall of sludgy, tuned-down, extraterrestrial Stoner Rock that could only be crafted in an alternate universe a million light years from Earth. It's a gloomy, metallic sonic supernova, an abundantly amplified interplanetary excursion into musical realms unknown. Sounding every bit a cosmic biker warrior, the vocalist grunts and growls like a lost soul ravaged by too much whiskey, meth, and nicotine. The rest of the band seems to be the god-like alien clones of Tony Iommi, Geezer Butler, and Bill Ward (the unholy instrumental trinity of Black Sabbath, in case you're wondering). If

SuperHeavyGoatAss were propelled into orbit, they'd shoot right past the moon in a gloriously blazing blur and rocket into an unexplored galaxy that's never seen the light of the sun. Radiantly blistering! (CD)-**Moser**

System of A Down "Mesmerize" *(American...look it up in the phone book)*. Yeah, they're quite popular and on the radio, blah blah blah... I don't care. *Toxicity* made me do a complete 180 on my opinion of this band and since then I have really grown to appreciate System of A Down. Four Armenian weirdos making some equally insane songs that have somehow gained some commercial acceptance, even though a majority of their catalog doesn't fit into the rigid Alt-Rock world. *Mesmerize* is just as psychotic and bright as their previous releases. The general lyrical theme is anti-war and addresses the current climate in American politics. Still, some lyrics written by guitarist/singer Daron Malakian and singer Serj Tankian teeter on ridiculous, with lines such as, "My c*ck is much bigger than yours," "gonorrhea gorgonzola" and name dropping Long Island's own Tony Danza. Success for a band like System of A Down can open the ears of casual music fans to some really vital music—remember, we all came from somewhere. (CD)-**KevTV**

Team Sleep *(Maverick, Madonna's people will find* ***you*** *if they want to...)*. Team Sleep has been in the works for over five years, and is the much-hyped project of Deftones frontman Chino Moreno. While I've enjoyed the material I've heard from the Deftones over the years, I must confess to not being too knowledgeable about their back catalog. However, if Team Sleep is any indication, it's something I must research immediately. While I hear numerous Deftones influences layered throughout Team Sleep's self-titled debut, to my ears this band has taken what Moreno has accomplished prior to an entirely different plane. This isn't just an album, it's an experience, a wild-ride with heavy-hitting Alterna-Rock one second, followed by one of the most melancholy ballads imaginable, featuring Mary Timony (who just recently released a solid album herself) of Helium on lead vocals, called "Tomb of Liegea." While a drum machine is present on more than half the album, for the remainder we're treated to the superior drumming of Zach Hill of Hella. Try to imagine if the Deftones relied more on electronics and developed a noticeable Shoegazer influence, and you might begin to scratch the surface of what Team Sleep is capable of. Excellent album. (CD)-**McClernon**

Thee Redliners "Celebrity Nation" *(www.dminusrecords.com)*. Thee Redliners rabidly hark back to a time when Garage Rock was raunchy, gritty, primitive, and mean. Indeed, *Celebrity Nation* abundantly possesses each of the aforementioned qualities plus plenty of spastic, spurting wildness and savage, heathen-like bombast to a highly frenzied, tremor-inducing degree. It's a tumultuous, action-packed tangle of slurred hyperactive vocals, lo-fi fuzz madness, and primal bone-break rhythms as only could be created in a two-car garage by a bunch of glassy-eyed, dirty-haired misfits who just don't give a damn about anything in life other than making noise. And Thee Redliners do it oh so very well! (CD)-**Moser**

They Might Be Giants "A User's Guide" *(Rhino, 3400 W. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91505)*. This is a greatest hits collection from They Might Be Giants. Usually I wouldn't cover a disc like this, or even a band like this for that matter, but this one is kind interesting. Aside from the fact there are 29 tracks, it collects tracks from all their film appearances, TV appearances and even their children's album. Not to mention this has the most bizarre time line booklet that you've ever seen. They actually try to put TMBG accomplishments in line with creation, birth, life, death and all other great human performances. This album is just way over the top and well put together. If you're a casual fan, this is a really good collection to get for all your favorite songs, including the *Malcolm...* theme. (CD)-**Myk**

This Day & Age "...Always Leave The Ground."*(One Eleven, www.111records.com)* Produced by Ed Rose—a painfully under-credited producer– *...Always Leave The Ground* alternates between hooky, Emo-free Power-Pop and down-tempo keyboard-based ballads. However, there is such a thing as too much candy-coating. While this isn't a full-length that I can make it through from start to finish, This Day & Age is a band that I'd be curious to see in concert, and expect to reach a wider audience by the end of 2005. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Thrice "If We Could Only See Us Now" *(Island, 825 Eighth Ave, New York, NY 10019)*. This is an interesting two disc set from Thrice. You have a CD and DVD, but it seems the DVD is the more compelling of the two. The CD features nine tracks, all of which are unreleased or really rare. There is a cover of "Eleanor Rigby" and also "Send Me An Angel," which are both fun. There are a couple of live tracks, like the band's performance at the Apple store and then there are some comp tracks and single B-sides. It's a good collection for the average fan who isn't going to hunt down all those releases for one song a piece. But, the DVD is something else; it's a two plus hour history of the band, essentially from their own words and pictures. It's professionally edited, but most of the footage is from the band's camcorder. The interviews are candid, and it shows a bunch of star struck kids that still are having a hard time grasping their current popularity. I liked the band before, but I confess that I was impressed with their personalities and their outlooks on their situation. This is a budget-priced release, and I would definitely suggest it for any even casual fan of the band, or anyone into the Emo and Screamo scenes. Success doesn't spoil everyone, and it seems Thrice proves that. (CD)-**Myk**

Torche *(Robotic Empire, POB 4211, Richmond, VA 23220)*. Honestly, with ex-members of Floor and Cavity, what the hell do you think it sounds like?! It's sludgy, noisy, powerful Doom Rock that's unrelenting on the bottom end of the musical scale. The big difference here is the vocals, that are actually fairly clean and sung, not dissimilar from Snake's vocals on Voi Vod's *Dimension Hatross*. These guys will be giving fans of Saint Vitus a whole new way to think. The Black Sabbath worship is obvious, but so is the experimentation with tonal comparisons that have some tracks using bottom end bass and high end guitar parts. Although there are a lot of bands out there like Hidden Hand, Place of Skulls and Fu Manchu, Torche's really stretching the border and has the most potential to break into the mainstream with a track like "Erase." (CD)-**Myk**

Totally Fucking Gay "With Friends Like These, Who Needs Enemas?" *(Hot Mann, 36 Central Park Rd, Plainview, NY 11803)*. What can I say, but, "ALBUM OF THE FUCKING YEAR." I haven't laughed this hard in years and it's all because of one of the most demented minds Long Island has ever produced. From the man who brought you the brilliance of Estrogenocide, Mr. Hymson has gone a step further into degeneracy with Totally Fucking Gay. This shit is funnier than the first Jerky Boys record. Some of the soon-to-be-classics presented here are "I Wanna Blow Justin Timberlake" ("I wanna blow Justin Timberlake/I'm sure his balls taste great/I think he waxes his chest/I hope he waxes his taint"), as well as the closer, "An Orgy with the Village People," which begins with "When I look at the construction worker/It makes me want to lay some pipe/I could smack the leather man's ass/Every single day for the rest of my life." Congrats, for you've now entered lyrical territory only reserved for the greats such as Tesco Vee and El Duce. And for those politically correct folks out there who think this is wrong and don't find this humorous in the least, well, umm... fuck you, I guess. (CD)-**McClernon**

The Tri-Fives "Won't Back Down" *(Fastmusic, POB 206512, New Haven, CT 06520)*. Yay, another sing-along Punk band that sounds like Rancid. Make sure nobody sees your mom drop you off at Warped Tour in her minivan. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

The Unseen "State of Discontent" *(Hellcat, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. I guess The Unseen have some history, but they're new to me. I don't keep up with the new Punk bands— they're boring and redundant compared to other things that are happening in underground music. Okay, so the Unseen sound like AFI before AFI went Emo, with some Sum 41 thrown in. It still doesn't do anything for me, though. Fans will love this album—nobody else will care. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

V/A "Dear Johnny...A Tribute to Cash" *(Hairball 8, POB 681674, San Antonio, TX 78268)*. Ever since I was old enough to walk and talk, I've held a special place in my heart for Johnny Cash. At a very early age, I was introduced to the grim, deeply etched baritone voice of The Man In Black and his gritty, rustic, true-to-life songs via various 8-track tapes (including *At San Quentin* and *At Folsom Prison*) that my grandmother would ceaselessly play in her car while carting me around town for an afternoon full of daily errands. I would sit mesmerized, entranced, and respectfully fearful, wondering who this Johnny Cash character could possibly be and from what treacherous, beaten path of purgatory had he come. He sounded like a mean old devil from Hell, but I somehow knew he had a heart as good as gold and a soul as deep, inspiring, and vast as the Grand Canyon itself. After all these years, I still hold sacred and dear the inimitable and vividly inspirational music of Johnny Cash, so I've been understandably reluctant to give any of the various Johnny Cash tributes being stocked in local music stores today much more than a passing glance. But *Dear Johnny* is an endearingly precious tribute from the hearts of all involved, and it is indeed an overwhelmingly pure reflection of unbridled devotion to a man who has had more of an impact on the music world than anyone since Beethoven or Bach (I ain't shittin' ya, kiddies!). It's all here: the whiskey-gulpin' C&W honky-tonk stomp of Dale Watson ("Guess Things Happen That Way") and Jesse Dayton ("Doin' My Time"), the swaggering barroom-bred Rock n' Roll grit of the Supersuckers ("Mean-Eyed Cat") and Speedbuggy USA ("Drive On"), the darkly provocative Industrial-tinged madness of Beverly Killbillies ("Wanted Man"), the rootsy rural Americana acoustics of Bastard Sons of Johnny Cash ("Long Black Veil") and Hot Rod Lincoln (a biblical rendition of "I Walk the Line"), the crazed cross-eyed Psychobilly rowdiness of Concombre Zombi ("Flesh & Blood") and Satan's Teardrops ("I Got Stripes"), the lively footloose-and-fancy-free Country Swing jauntiness of Todd Stedman ("Hey Porter"), and so much more. *Dear Johnny*

is as much a heartfelt appreciation of The Man In Black as it is a definitive tribute, and I cannot go wrong in duly singing its praises. Mr. Cash would undoubtedly be proud. (CD)-**Moser**

V/A "Just Go Destroy Everything in Sight!" *(Dionysus, POB 1975, Burbank, CA 91507)*. Contemporary underground Japanese Rock bands? Every song on this collection sounds like it was lifted from 1966, 1974 or 1982. I prefer my music to be more original, thank you. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

V/A "Kicked Outta Purgatory…Psychobilly" *(Hairball 8, POB 681674, San Antonio, TX 78268)*. Ladies and gentlemen, sinners and criminals, ghouls and goblins, I now present to you the greatest, most ultimate sonically exciting Psychobilly compilation ever to blast out of the Rock n' Roll underworld! It's a life-altering, flesh-crawling freakshow of some of the sickest, most twisted sounds known to man, a blood-curdling horror-filled musical extravaganza unlike any other! Ya get 29 devilishly decadent ditties served up by the villainous, maniacal likes of Demented Are Go!, Nekromantix, Barnyard Ballers, Koffin Kats, Demon City Wreckers, Hayride To Hell, Guana Batz, Deadbolt, Coffin Creeps, Mad Sin, Phantom Rockers, Astro Zombies, and oh so many more. *Kicked Outta Purgatory* is guaranteed to stir up an almighty ruckus in the graveyard and raise the slumbering mortal dead overnight. Beware the thunder! (CD)-**Moser**

V/A "Smash the States" *(Suicide Watch, POB 9599, Charlotte, NC 28299)*. There was a time 20 years ago or so, it seems, when a compilation of this caliber would come along and shake the punk community to its inner core (the double-album *PEACE/WAR* comp is an outstanding example from the dreadful Reagan era). It was a somewhat routine occurrence in the early '80s. But unfortunately not so often the case the past couple of decades. *Smash the States* (subtitled *Redefining Punk Rock From the South*) is the modern day equivalent of *PEACE/WAR* to a certain degree in that it collects some of the best damn Punk music of our time from bands of which you'd probably never otherwise be aware. These 35 bands represent such sleepy non-punk locales as North and South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida. And every conceivable sub-genre of Punk is represented, as well, whether it be Bowery, Crusty, Hardcore, Oi, Art, Street, Anarcho, Melodicore, and even Pop (thankfully none of it being the sugary sweet "Hot Topic" Punk that's so tremendously popular with the sheep-like, fashion-crazed mall crowd this day and age!). Some of the bands that especially grabbed me by the earlobes include My So-Called Band, Obgyn, New Mexican Disaster Squad, My Mind's Mine, I Live With Zombies, Nuklehead, Sick Sick Sick, Stations, Flamin' Anus, The Fighting Mailmen, Dead End Heist, The Dead Kings, New School Dropouts, and Perfo. In a perfect world, *Smash the States* would make huge waves and cause mainstream society to stand up and take notice. Even if it fails to do so, it will prove one thing for sure: Punk ain't dead (at least not in the South)! (CD)-**Moser**

V/A With Honor/ The Distance *(Martyr, POB 955, Harriman, NY 10926)*. This is the first release in a series split CDs by Martyr documenting regional scenes. This one happens to feature two bands from my home state of Connecticut. Bands didn't sound like this when I left, that's for sure. These two bands that are getting back to the old days of Hardcore. Both bands feature bits of Revelation style New York Hardcore with some DC influences mixed in. They aren't Hatebreed clones and no one is going to die at the kickboxing matches—I mean shows—these guys will play. Of the two groups, I seem to favor The Distance's three tracks a little more. They have a much more straight forward Hardcore sound to them, while With Honor has a little more of the melodic elements prevailing in the tracks. There is no bad here. It's a personal preference. These are both amazing bands, and this is a great split if not just a bit too short. I can vouch that The Distance full-length is stellar, and I know I'm going out to sample With Honor as soon as I can find it. Another great Martyr release. (CD)-**Myk**

VCR *(SideOneDummy, POB 2350, Los Angeles, CA 90078)*. While VCR—not to be confused with abstract noisemongers (v)cr, a.k.a. (vaginal) cleansing ritual from Long Island *Blackout* comp and the *Lollipop* MP3 CDs—could be considered another band filtered into the current crop of "New Wave" acts, what makes them stand apart is their reluctance to become a nostalgia act. On the contrary, while their sound might remind you of Devo, Depeche Mode, New Order, etc., VCR are futuristic visionaries, looking forward to see what new noise they can make electronically, sans guitars. They'll be the first to admit that they didn't grow up on the bands that they've been compared to, and it's refreshing to hear their honesty emitting throughout this seven song EP. If the Cure or Depeche Mode one day decided to take some crystal meth on a whim, VCR would be the manic result of said action. The songs are intensely catchy and spastic keyboard-driven pop songs, coupled with a set of balls that few of the bands of the original New Wave could ever muster together. I can't wait for a full-length. (CD)-**McClernon**

Watershed "The Fifth of July" *(Idol, POB 720043, Dallas, TX 75372)*. Power-Pop that's easily forgettable the moment the disc ends. Not horrid by any means, but nothing that'll keep your ears glued to the speakers, either. (CD)-**McClernon**

Weerd Science "Friends and Nervous Breakdowns" *(Equal Vision, POB 14, Hudson, NY 12534)*. People looking for an Emo record are going to be crying in their turtlenecks when they hear this Hip Hop piece. Weerd Science is the drummer from Coheed and Cambria's side project, but publicizing that fact will backfire because this sounds nothing like Coheed, and the Hip Hop kids probably don't care about that band anyway This is an amazing debut album by a five-member collaboration, and is a cross between Eminem and the earliest recordings of the Lost Boyz. This guy's voice entirely reminds me of Mr. Cheeks and the rhymes are pretty hot. He doesn't flub any of his deliveries and the beats are pretty dynamic. Truth be told, I hate Coheed, and it pains me to say that this album has me totally enthralled. Give Weerd Science a chance—if you're down with Hip Hop, this is the real deal. (CD)-**Myk**

When Tigers Fight *(Indecision, POB 6052, Garden Grove, CA 92846)*. Taking their name (presumably) from the infamous Alone In A Crowd song, When Tigers Fight, comprised of members of The Promise and The Suicide File, offer a barrage of bracing Rock-tinged Hardcore. A good sense of layered harmony clashes with raw dissonance, propelling these five songs along with force. The end result is dirge-heavy, offering a decidedly dark vision that should appeal to a good number of listeners across the Hardcore/Punk gamut. The lyrics, which often assail vapid Hardcore trends and scenesters, prove especially poignant.(CD)-**Ramek**

Whole In One "Demo" *(www.wholeinoneband.com)*. This CD from these Staten Island youngsters showcases three songs that remind me—mainly because of the raw recording quality—of *Punkhouse*-era Screeching Weasel, which is never a bad thing. While not as tight or tuneful as Screeching Weasel at that point in their careers, Whole In One's sound is cut from the same cloth, with an ear being their strongest asset. Look out for these cats, 'cause I'd wager they have a promising future ahead. (CD)-**McClernon**

Wow, Owls! "Pick Your Patterns" *(The Perpetual Motion Machine, POB 7364, Richmond, VA 23221)*. Being a screaming Emo band (not Screamo), Wow, Owls! lack the unnecessary noodling of their contemporaries, although they still like to write songs in ¾ time signatures. They're actually a lot more listenable than most Emo, no doubt due to their noisy nature; however, the lyrics bare the unmistakable pretentious mark of Emo. I'm gonna say Emo once more, just for the hell of it. (CD)-**chuck.foster**

Wrecking Crew "1987-1991" *(Bridge Nine, POB 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052)*. Boston's once formidable Wrecking Crew purveyed a distinctive brand of Hardcore that dominated the New England scene in the late '80s. That particular era in Boston Hardcore history has been regarded by some as a time of creative stagnation, though this retrospective may serve to dispel such sentiments. With a street-wise urban feel that owed far more to the New York Hardcore scene of the day than the stripped-down Thrash that characterized the early'80s Boston sound, Wrecking Crew procured mid-tempo rhythmic bruisers that were at once heavy and intricate. A surly blue collar vibe (which could be likened to that conveyed by such contemporary outfits as Breakdown and Raw Deal) defined much of the lyrical content, while a crushing riff barrage that retained a Metal edge (but never succumbed to full-on Metal wankery) resonated throughout. Those who enjoy the grittier side of late '80s Hardcore should take heed. (CD)-**Ramek**

The Wrong Side "…of the Grave" *(Lockin' Out, 36 Cherokee St. #2, Roxbury, MA 02120)*. In a near perfect rendition of the NYHC brutality of yore, The Wrong Side offer a bout of heavy Hardcore, complete with impressive guitar crunch, double bass pedal-driven beats and rollicking vocal work. The street-wise sound on this record elicits fond memories of Breakdown and Outburst-era Big Apple mayhem. A strong sense of layered craftsmanship goes into virtually every number here, which ensures a diverse collection of songs that pummel relentlessly. The production is unusually slick, but this does the sound cultivated herein much justice. Recommended. (CD)-**Ramek**

Zatokrev *(Earache, 43 West 38th St., 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018)*. I don't know where to begin. This is like Sleep meets Neurosis. It's slow and powerful with a spacey ambience. The vocals are pained and shouted, reminiscent of those on *Through Silver and Blood*. The album has a lot of bass-generated atmosphere and very non-traditional drums. If you've been grooving on the new High On Fire or Mastodon, and have been let down by the latest Neurosis, this is for you. (CD)-**Myk**

VIDEO STUFF

MUSIC

Dwarves "Fuck You Up and Get Live" *(Music Video Distributors, POB 280, Oaks, PA 19456)*. Recorded live in New York City, this is the longest performance I have ever seen from this band. First, they're all sober, which depending on your outlook could be good or bad. If you're expecting the historic Dwarves violence and nudity, you'll get it only in the bonus presentation of their six videos, but those alone are worth the purchase of this DVD. If you're looking for them to play their music, which they seldom do, then this is excellent. The band makes it through the entire 19 song set and the sound quality is amazing. The multi-camera shoot makes the Continental look way bigger than it is, but the place was packed and the crowd angles reveal a lot. The last bonus they have are multi camera angle views of the entire disc. You can watch the whole show from any of the cameras used as opposed to the cut final version. It's interesting, especially if you want to learn how the guitar riffs or drum beats are played. (DVD)**-Myk**

Evergreen Terrace "Hotter! Wetter! Stickier! Funnier!" *(Eulogy, POB 24913, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307)*. I believe this is Evergreen Terrace's first DVD, and it's a lot of fun. There are five professionally cut videos which show the highlights of the band's live performance, as well as some of the band members' personal humor. The DVD also includes a full live set for 2003 filmed with a multi-camera black n' white set up. Last, the disc has a documentary of the band that's mostly just the members talking and showing clips from the tour and the hi-jinks away from the stage. The set up of the disc is a little weak. During the documentary, there are two funny interviews with homeless guys the band met on the road, but it becomes overkill—the full interviews are included at the end of the disc, so end up watching the entire interviews again as opposed to just the deleted material. Evergreen Terrace is my favorite band on Eulogy, and this is a strong effort as a hour-long home video, especially the live performance and the crowd footage. (DVD)**-Myk**

Government Issue "Flipside: Live 1985" *(Music Video Distributors, POB 280, Oaks, PA 19456)*. This is some of the fiercest 50 minutes of Punk Rock you'll find on DVD. This is a re-issue of the *Flipside* videotape that came out some years ago, and consists of two complete shows; one from June of 1985 and the other from August of 1985. The second show is the better of the two because they really showcase songs from the *Joyride* album, where the first show was pretty strictly *The Fun Just Never Ends*. The video quality is a little rough; at one point the picture actually breaks down and you run to the VCR to save your tape...then realize it's a DVD. The sound is boosted to 5.1 and they did the best possible job to save the audio and boost the video from this old master. Thinking that this is not essential to your collection is retarded...you should actually own it by the time you finish this review. (DVD)**-Myk**

The Murder City Devils "The End: The Final Show Halloween 2001" *(Music Video Distributors, POB 280, Oaks, PA 19456)*. Wow. I'm sad I don't live in Seattle. Okay, I'm not, but I was the night this show went down. This is the companion video to the live album that was released last year. It features the complete performance in all its glory and the only hiccup is the missing Leslie, who couldn't play the show. It even features Andrea from Pretty Girls Make Graves making her appearance for "Boom Swagger," which was stellar. The gang all dressed up for Halloween, including a sailor suit and a Devo Mark Mothersbaugh costume. Pure chaos ensues during the set, including a few surprise guests in the crown. The DVD also includes five old live bootleg clips from early shows with the band and an excellent audio commentary with Spencer and Merchbot 2000. That is where you find out who all the guests are, why Leslie isn't there and even about her replacement for the night. Seeing this doesn't make the absence of Murder City any easier, but it was a blast of a going away party that lasted over an hour, which, for Murder City Devils, might as well have been two shows. (DVD)**-Myk**

Public Enemy "It Takes A Nation: The First London Invasion 1987" *(Music Video Distributors, POB 280, Oaks, PA 19456)*. Public Enemy, you ask? What are they doing among all this Punk, Hardcore, Metal and other underground propaganda? Well, if you need to ask, you need to do some serious research. These guys were like the Crass of the Hip Hop world in the late '80s and early '90s. This is a documentary that was recorded in 1987 surrounding the band's part in the Def Jam European tour. There are interview snippets placed in between tracks from their live London performance, but there's also the option to just watch the concert if you choose. The audio commentary with Chuck D is almost essential listening for a history of the genre, although he plugs some of the band's other upcoming video projects a little too much. You learn about the group, the members of their stage crew and even a little about Terminator X and Professor Griff. The video has been fairly well preserved, although the color is a little off at times. The sound has been given a total remastering. This is a true Hip Hop history lesson, and also features some bonus footage of the band in Australia in 2003. If you hurry, you can also get the special version which comes with a CD of unreleased Public Enemy mixes. (DVD)**-Myk**

SHEER TERROR

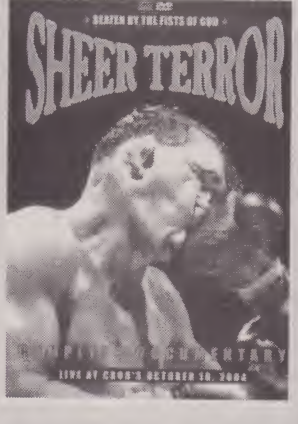
"BEATEN BY THE FISTS OF GOD"

(Thorp, POB 6786, Toledo, OH 43612).

Sheer Terror was one of those bands that people always talked about, whether they were discussing the band's thunking Hardcore, chaotic live shows or frontman Paul Bearer's charisma. But you already know that.

So..On one hand, *Beaten By the Fists of God* is a live set from Sheer Terror's reunion/funeral shows at CBGB's in October of 2004; on the other, it's a documentary tracing the band's history through interviews with different members, rare video clips and the like.

The band's live set is surprisingly tight, and although some of the camera work gets shaky at points, it's probably very much the same effect you'd get if you were there, without the jostling of sweaty bodies from all sides. Paul wisecracks between songs (my personal fave: "They wail, they sob and they mope" during their cover of Boys Don't Cry"), Neuman throws out fireball leads and the crowd can barely keep off the stage. And yes, hits like "I, Spoiler," "Just Can't Hate Enough" and "Love Song For the Unloved" are all here.



I especially appreciated the documentary, as it gives insight into a group that was always enigmatic. Though most of this focuses on Paul, all band members throughout the years have a say, and there's rare footage like the "Broken" video. Of particular interest is Paul's drawing a parallel between Sheer Terror songs and country music; the band also shares their experience with signing to MCA.

There are also on camera anecdotes from people like Rob Lind (Blood For Blood), Bill Wilson (Blackout!), Marky Ramone. Lou and Criag from Sick of It All, Matt from Dropkick Murphys, Andy from Thorp, and Danny from North Side Kings.

The first pressing of the DVD comes with the live set on CD, which would even be cool alone.

OTHER COOL STUFF

"Anatomy of Hell" *(Tartan Video, 8322 Beverly Blvd, Suite 300, Los Angeles, CA 90048)*. You will not find a more bizarre sexual thriller on the market today. Take a average looking woman with a stunning body and place her in the bathroom of a gay men's dance club. Have her found by a guy who bumped into her in the hallway as she is bleeding to deal from slitting her wrists. He brings her to the hospital to be fixed up, and in

return, she offers to pay him for a week's worth of sexual exploration. No strings, no names and no inhabitions; he can do whatever he wants to her, as long as he can explain why to her why she doesn't turn him on. In a way, it's almost an exploration into the question of whether "the right person can turn a gay person straight." The film stars Rocco Siffredi, who has done over 270 porn films, and Amira Casar who is a former Chanel model. The film is not a porn, but there are brief moments of sex in the art house sense. Actually, they used a fake vagina for several of the close up shots in the film. The film takes a hard look at misconceptions about men and women and some of the longest-standing sexual rumors and mysteries. Some might say the film is a little over the top, I think it would be hard to get the point across without the graphic elements. The film is subtitled, but there's little verbal communication as it's more involved in the physical exploration. Fans of films like *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* and *Caligula* will more than appreciate the sheer intensity of this film. If you're easily offended by the physical relationship between human beings, the concept of gay human beings and the mythos associated with women, then you want to skip this one. (DVD)-**Myk**

"Dementia" *(BLB Media, 19744 Beach Blvd #221, Huntington Beach, CA 92648)*. I wish this guy a lot of luck. I was sent a burned copy of the DVD for the review and as of the time I write this, he still has no distribution deal for it. This is an excellent horror film that features a gender bender murderer/kidnapper, his converted cohort and their two current victims. Mr. Martin has the transvestite qualities of Wild Bill from *Silence of the Lambs*, while having the mindset of Francis from *Red Dragon* and the transformation of the mind and body into something bigger. Elvin and Frankie are taken captive by Mr. Martin and have to have the story told to them after they are found. The police have a video of the entire three week ordeal and all the torture they endured. The film is set up as the viewer is watching the same tape that Elvin is. There is an interesting dynamic that the director uses with fake newscasts about the missing men and also a broadcast of a so called "expert" talking about serial killers and their text book styles and why this is all wrong. The film is amazingly gory for a low budget flick—not that indie films don't have blood and guts, they just usually don't look this convincing. The ending of the film, with the big escape from captivity is a little weak, but they make the most of the scene and the proverbial "vengeance." This film, with a little budget and a slight rewrite has the makings of a hit. If you get the chance to check this out, support the guys. These are the people we need to encourage; it's something original and well thought out, as opposed to just remaking someone else's films because American's are too lazy to read subtitles. Check out www.dementiathemovie.com to see if you can catch a screening. (DVD)-**Myk**

"Infection" *(Lion's Gate, 2700 Colorado Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90404)*. *Infection* is a new movie from the creators of *Ju-on* and *Ringu*. The film is far less supernatural than *Ju-on*, and features far less of the choppy editing that made those other two films cultural phenomenons. *Infection* deals with a small hospital that is significantly under budget. Because of this they have to turn away patients, as even the staff is no longer getting paid. During a treatment, the staff accidentally kills a patient, and they decide to cover it up from the other patients and the media. Soon after that, a severely burned patient dies from an odd infection that causes glowing green ooze to drip from his wounds. Some of the management experiments with the ooze to see what it is and after that, the staff starts to come down with the infection one by one, and it's a rush to survive for the patients and the staff. Will any of them get out alive? Why are some staff members getting it and not others? As Japanese horror movies go, this is a far more psychological film than we have been exposed to so far. The film is not up to the standard set by *Ringu*, but is still far superior to most of the dribble that Hollywood has recently tried to pass as horror. There's some gore, but it's only slightly more gruesome than most Japanese films as, for the most part, they aren't gory films. The film is in Japanese with sub-titles. Unfortunately, there are no extras on the disc, but the letterbox transfer is excellent. (DVD)-**Myk**

"Labyrinth of Flames" *(US Manga, 250 W 57th St., Suite 317, New York, NY 10107)*. The tag line for this film is "Tales of A Wannabe Samurai," and it couldn't be more fitting. Take a total dork who aspires to be a Samurai (he even carries around a wooden sword and has a bad top ponytail). Put him in a situation where the hottest girl you've ever seen hits on him, but only gets a response when she gives him a sword that was "laying around her house." The girl turns out to be a princess and has a full-time bodyguard, who also happens to be female. Galan (goofball) decides to go to his new girlfriend's (Lady Natsu) house, except unknown to him, the sword she's given him is a traditional family sword given to a daughter's husband to be. Add to the insanity a reporter from America with an enormous chest and panties hanging out the bottom of her too-short skirt, the Princess's warrior Aunt(who is the most attractive character of this female heavy story) and two spies who are practically naked and equally as deadly. Can Galan save them all from the onslaught on the King's home? Can Galan keep from breaking his own neck while playing Samurai is the real question. This tale has a more comedic tone and has an almost Benny Hill type flair with a total dope surrounded by nothing but hot women. This isn't an Anime 18 title, so you don't have to feel like a total perv when picking it up. (DVD)-**Myk**

"Malevolence" *(Anchor Bay, 1699 Stutz Dr., Troy, MI 48084)*. First off, this film was created entirely by a Long Island native. It's low budget, but done with a lot of love. The story revolves around Julian and Marilyn, two lovers who are down on their luck and owe a loan shark a lot of money. To pay it off, the two, with help from a friend and Marilyn's brother, decide to rob a bank. Marilyn's brother is shot to death and Kurt is to be met at a farm house out in the woods. Along the way, Kurt kidnaps Samantha and Courtney, a mother and daughter, for transportation and insurance. Courtney manages to escape from her captor, but Samantha (the mother) is held. Kurt chases Courtney, and Samantha is discovered by Marilyn and Julian. The problem is, now Kurt is nowhere to be found—and there's also someone else around. The movie has a total '80's slasher film look and feel to it, a *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* meets *Friday the 13th* meets *Halloween*. Considering this was a totally self-financed independent film, it's quite an accomplishment. The DVD is chock full of extras though, with a commentary, a new "making of..." featurette on location, rehearsal footage, deleted scenes, promotional trailers and a DVD-ROM of the script. Small productions like this need to be supported, rather than the Hollywood crap we're subjected to now. (DVD)-**Myk**

"Memento Mori" *(Tartan Video, 8322 Beverly Blvd, Suite 300, Los Angeles, CA 90048)*. *Memento Mori* is the ultimate tale of teen sexual confusion and desire to be kept out of the spotlight. Min-Ah discovers a lost diary depicting a blooming relationship between two of her classmates. Both are considered a little odd, but Min-Ah becomes fixated on the two, whose relationship has soured and become splintered in recent months. Page after page is read, and Min-Ah feels compelled to become part of this inner circle. As she starts her mission, one of the girls turns up dead. It looks like a suicide, but after reading the diary, Min-Ah is not so sure. But there is more to it than that. There is also a little matter of a psychic link, that Min-Ah has seemingly replaced the recently deceased girl's part in. Many of the Asian films take place in girls' schools (especially in the horror and anime genres), but this one has a more psychological feel, as well as exploring some real life horror: the acceptance of people who are different, the acceptance of things we're socialized to consider "wrong," the daily fear of growing up in general. All of these daily issues are addressed in this film, and they'll strike a chord in each and every one of us on one level or another.(DVD)-**Myk**

ULVER
BLOOD INSIDE

Ulver - Blood Inside

The strange, stray birds of the black metal branch fly off into another metamorphosis. **Blood Inside** sees **Ulver's** evolution moving on a grand scale. **Blood Inside** offers more vocals, more variety and infinite interpretations. 9 surgically precise shapeshifts, performed with a wide array of instruments and unorthodox operational techniques. All hail the new Pope!

Black sheep? Never. Wolves prey upon sheep.

Written, performed and produced by Ulver, with a little help from legendary producer/mixer/artist Ronan Chris Murphy (King Crimson's preferred audio pilot). Includes a video clip.

Thine Eyes Bleed

Thine Eyes Bleed - In The Wake of Separation

Aggressive raw Thrash. Thine Eyes Bleed does not confine its songwriting to a single genre; they will never be typecast. The only rule: their songs must be brutal and unforgettable. "...this debut album is a journey through thrash heaven." - planetloud.com

Antimatter - Planetary Confinement

The saddest album of 2005. Antimatter moves toward richer, more organic textures with Planetary Confinement. Forsaking the electronic elements found on Saviour and Lights Out, natural string, piano and drum sounds form the foundation, with beautiful melancholy vocalizations provided by male and female vocalists. For fans of Portishead, Massive Attack, Pink Floyd and anyone that feels the weight on the world on their shoulders.

Peccatum - The Moribund People

Peccatum's second EP and fifth overall release offers three new recordings: The Moribund People,"A Penny's Worth Of Heart", and a unique cover of Bathory's "For All Those Who Died". Peccatum bravely continues to tread fresh ground with every new song a treasure for those demanding high-end symphonic avantgarde dark-rock.

Subteranean Masquerade - Suspended Animaton Dreams

Evocative Prog Art Metal. "By taking their sound even further and exploring the more intimate characteristics of progressive rock, psychedelia, post-rock and doom metal, Subterranean Masquerade have created an astonishingly unique, delicate, and masterfully woven opus, making this act one of a kind..." - BW&BK

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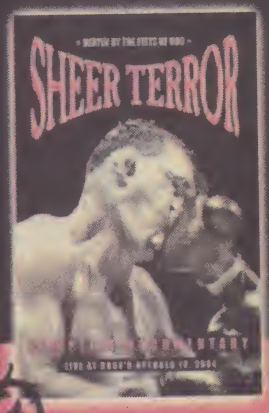


BEATEN BY THE FISTS OF GOD

SHEER TERROR

COMPLETE DOCUMENTARY

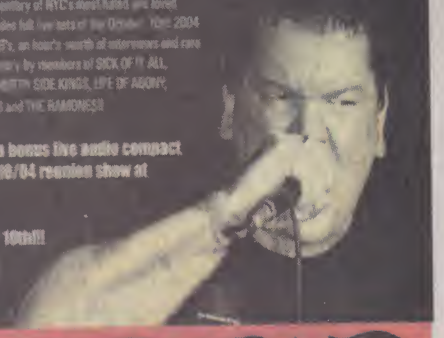
LIVE AT CBGB'S OCTOBER 10, 2004

Complete DVD documentary of NYC's most hated and loved hardcore bands. Includes full live sets of the October 10th, 2004 reunion show at CBGB's, an hour's worth of interviews and rare footage and commentary by members of SICK OF IT ALL, BLOOD FOR BLOOD, MURPH'S SIDE KINGS, LIFE OF AGONY, DROPKICK MURPHYS and THE RAMONES!!

Also includes a bonus five audio compact disc of the 10/10/04 reunion show at CBGB's!!

IN STORES MAY 10th!!!

DVD



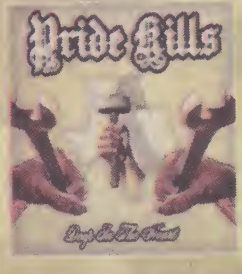
Brutal metallic hardcore from these east coast veterans (formerly MUSHMOUTH). Featuring guest vocals by Jay ISMEAN of FURY OF FIVE.

For Fans Of: SLAYER, HATEBREED, IRON MAIDEN, and TERROR

Out For Win

BEG FOR LIFE

IN STORES MAY 24th!!!



Pride Kills

Deep In The Heart

IN STORES MAY 10th!!!

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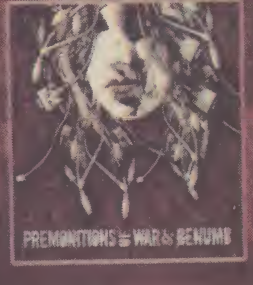
For Fans Of: TERROR, BLOOD FOR BLOOD, and HATEBREED.



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